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An Outlaw's Diary

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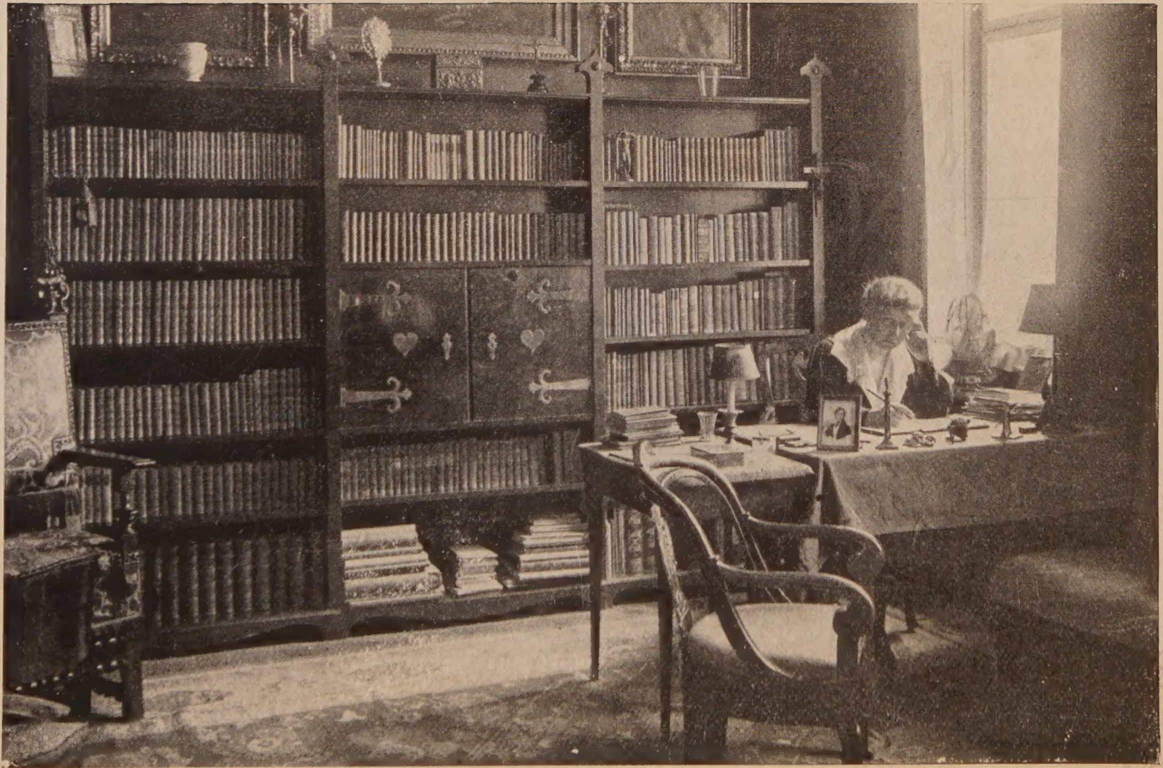

THE AUTHOR IN HER STUDY

(Frontispiece.)

AN OUTLAW'S DIARY:
REVOLUTION

By
CÉCILE TORMAY

WITH A FOREWORD BY
THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND

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TO
A GENTLE VICTIM
OF THE REVOLUTION
MY UNFORGETTABLE MOTHER
I DEDICATE THIS
BOOK

PREFACE

It was fate that dubbed this book *An Outlaw's Diary*, for it was itself outlawed at a time when threat of death was hanging over every voice that gave expression to the sufferings of Hungary. It was in hiding constantly, fleeing from its parental roof to lonely castles, to provincial villas, to rustic hovels. It was in hiding in fragments, between the pages of books, under the eaves of strange houses, up chimneys, in the recesses of cellars, behind furniture, buried in the ground. The hands of searching detectives, the boots of Red soldiers, have passed over it. It has escaped miraculously, to stand as a memento when the graves of the victims it describes have fallen in, when grass has grown over the pits of its gallows, when the writings in blood and bullets have disappeared from the walls of its torture chambers.

And now that I am able to send the book forth in print, I am constrained to omit many facts and many details which as yet cannot stand the light of day, because they are the secrets of living men. The time will come when that which is dumb to-day will be at liberty to raise its voice. And as some time has now passed since I recorded, from day to day, these events, much that was obscure and incomprehensible has been cleared up. Yet I will leave the pages unrevised, I will leave the pulsations of those hours untouched. If I have been in the wrong, I pray the reader's indulgence. My very errors will mirror the errors of those days.

Here is no attempt to write the history of a revolution, nor is this the diary of a witness of political events. My desire is only that my book may give voice to those human phases which historians of the future will be unable to describe—simply because they are known only to those who have lived through them. It shall speak of those things which were unknown to the foreign inspirers of the revolution, because to them everything that was truly Hungarian was incomprehensible.

May there survive in my book that which perishes with us: the honour of a most unfortunate generation of a people that has been sentenced to death. May those who come after us see what tortures our oppressed and humiliated race suffered silently during the year of its trial. May *An Outlaw's Diary* be the diary of our sufferings. When I wrote it my desire was to meet in its pages those who were my brethren in common pain; and through it I would remain in communion with them even to the time which neither they nor I will ever see—the coming of the new Hungarian spring.

CECILE TORMAY.

BUDAPEST,
Christmas, 1920.

FOREWORD

The writer of this book tells us that "here is no attempt to write the history of a revolution, nor is this the diary of a witness of political events." Nevertheless the fact remains that it contains much more than the personal experiences of an actor in one of the greatest tragedies that has occurred in recent history. If it were only that, its value would still be very great, for it is so vivid and dramatic a human document, and yet its style is so simple and so completely devoid of all "frills" or straining after effect, that it will appeal as much to those who like good literature and a moving tale for their own sakes, as to those who desire to understand a chapter of history about which little is known, but which yet throws a flood of light upon the great world movements of to-day.

To those who are interested in that international revolutionary movement which, in one form or another, is threatening every civilized state to-day, this book will be invaluable. The course of events which led up to the revolution in Hungary was precisely similar to the course of events in Russia. In both cases there was a more or less open radical, socialistic, and pacifist movement working in conjunction with a hidden subversive movement. In Hungary the latter movement is described as "a pseudo-scientific organization of the Freemasons, the International Freethinkers' Branch of Hungarian Higher Schools, and the Circle of Galilee with its almost exclusively Jewish membership."

In both cases the way for revolution was prepared by an insidious propaganda in the workshops and in the Army and Navy. In both cases the revolution was not the result of a spontaneous outburst of popular feeling but of a sinister conspiracy using the confusion and discouragement of a military disaster for its own ends. In both cases the first step towards the complete overthrow of Church and State was the erection of a bourgeois radical and socialist republic whose aim was to disintegrate and demoralise as a preliminary to the coup d'état which ushered in "the dictatorship of the Proletariat." Russia had her Kerensky, Hungary her Károlyi.

This book deals with Hungary's agony from the standpoint of one who experienced every one of its phases; it does not deal with Hungary's resurrection from the grave of Bolshevism, and it is here that the parallel with Russia ceases. The heart of Hungary was sound; the corruption, demoralisation and inertia which have made Russia the plague-spot of humanity had not so deeply permeated the national life of Hungary. The race had too much vigour, too great a regard for its religion, its history, its traditions and its liberty to submit for long to that soul-destroying tyranny. And yet—and here is a lesson for the countries of Western Europe—this nation, which, owing to its traditions and the character and pursuits of its people would have seemed less disposed than any other to submit to Communism, did for a time succumb to the despotism of a few criminal fanatics, a gang of mental and moral perverts. And the disaster was due not so much to the strength of the subversive influences as to the weakness and cowardice of the authorities in Church and State and in Society at large.

In a great industrial country like Great Britain there is far more favourable ground than there was in Hungary for the production of anti-social philosophies and the manufacture of revolutionaries; the danger from insidious propaganda, from the failure of Government to govern, is no less but rather more than it was in Hungary. This book shows how appalling are the consequences of even a temporary overthrow of those bulwarks of civilisation, law, order and religion, and that mankind in the 20th Century is capable of reverting in a moment to the barbarism and anarchy of the Dark Ages. Russia, Italy, Hungary and Ireland have all in the past few years told the same tale. One of the greatest empires of the world now presents the picture of a society enduring a living death; Hungary and Italy have saved themselves by their exertions and perhaps Europe by their example. Ireland's fate is trembling in the balance, but the corruption of a whole population, the systematic training of the youth of a country to exalt rebellion into a science and murder into a religion, can only have one result. If the cancer has been checked in some quarters, if the gangrene has been amputated here and there, the poison is still working through all the European body politic, not only in those outrageous forms which naturally arouse opposition in all decent and educated minds, but in those subtle forms which disguise themselves under the cloak of a spurious Christianity, a zeal for humanity, the brotherhood of man, and the internationalism of Labour. The open and the hidden agitations subsist side by side and each plays into the other's hands. The "Red" International of Moscow, the "Yellow" International of Amsterdam, the various shades of Socialism and Syndicalism, are all parts of one great subversive Movement though their adherents are not all aware of it, and the strings are pulled by the Secret Societies which during the past century have been behind every revolution in Europe.

And, as this book reminds us, the only means of counteracting the danger is not by surrender or compromise, not by seeking new creeds and theories but in adherence to old ones, not by nursing illusions but by facing facts, by courage, by a steadfast regard for principles, by the faith of authority in its mission, by "strengthening the things which remain and are ready to die."

NORTHUMBERLAND.

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AN OUTLAW'S DIARY

CHAPTER I

October 31st, 1918.

The town was preparing for the Day of the Dead, and white chrysanthemums were being sold at the street corners. A mad, black crowd carried the flowers with it. This year there will not be any for the cemeteries: the quick adorn themselves with that which belongs to the dead.

Flowers of the graveyard, symbols of decay, white chrysanthemums. A town beflowered like a grave, under a hopeless sky. Such is Budapest on the 31st of October, 1918.

Between the rows of houses shabby, drenched flags wave on their staffs, and the pavement is covered with dirt. Torn bits of paper, pieces of posters, crushed white flowers mixed in the mud. The town is as filthy and gloomy as a foul tavern after a night's debauch.

This night Count Michael Károlyi's National Council has grasped the reins of power.

So low have we fallen! Anger and inexpressible bitterness assailed me. Against my will, with an irresistible obsession, my eyes were reading over and over again the inscriptions on strips of red, white, and green paper which were pasted on the shop windows in unceasing repetition: "Long live the Hungarian National Council" . . . Who has wanted this council? Who has asked for it? Why do they stand it?

Count Julius Andrássy, the Monarchy's Minister for Foreign Affairs in Vienna, was clamouring desperately for a separate peace. The thought of it raised in my mind the picture of some distant little wooden crosses . . . As if they came down from among the clouds . . . Graves at the foot of the Carpathians, on the Transylvanian frontier, along the Danube. Fallen in the defence of Hungarian soil . . .

And now we forsake the mothers, wives and children of those who are buried there. The blood rushed to my face. Everything totters, even the country's honour. The very war-news fluctuates wildly. Our heroes gain tragic, profitless victories on Mount Assolo, whilst on the plains of Venezia the army is already in retreat—along the Drina, the Száva and the Danube too. And here in the capital the soldiers are swearing allegiance to Károlyi's National Council. What a mean tragedy! And over the empty royal castle, over the bridges, on the steamers on the Danube, flags are flying as if for a holiday.

I reached the Elisabeth Bridge. In irregular ranks disarmed Bosnian soldiers marched past me, most of them carrying small military trunks on their shoulders. The little wooden boxes moved irregularly up and down in rhythm with their steps, which had lost their discipline. The soldiers cheer and cannot understand what it all means. But for all that: "Zivio!" They are allowed to go home, so they are going towards the railway station.

A motor lorry came up the bridge towards me. The electric trams have stopped, and the whole road belonged to the lorry. It raced along furiously, noisily, like a crazy wild animal that has escaped captivity. Armed young ruffians and soldiers stood on it, shouting; and a boy, looking like an apprentice, lifted his rifle with an effort and fired it into the air. The boy was small, the rifle nearly as long as himself. Everything seemed so incredible, so unnatural. One of the Bosnians appeared to think so too, for he turned back as he went along. I can see him now, with his prematurely aged face under the grey cap. He shook his head and muttered something.

Then the Bosnians disappeared. The damp wind blew cold from the Danube between the houses of Pest, and the rain started again.

At the corner, three men were gathered under a single umbrella, their big boots looking as if they stood empty in the water on the road. Their coats too looked as if they were empty, and the water drizzled from their worn-out hats on to the collars of their coats. Clearly they were petty officials. For thirty years and more they have been accustomed to go at this time of the day to their office. Now they have found suddenly that the path has slipped away from under their feet, and they don't know what to do: this was an unlawful business . . . the official oath . . . their conscience . . . If it were not for the question how to live! What about the others? Perhaps they have gone already. One ought to take counsel with the head of the department . . .

They discussed the matter, started to go, stopped, then started again. Finally, when I looked after them they were walking on steadily, as if they had found the accustomed groove from which it was impossible for them to swerve.

Posters, fastened to poles, were floating in the air. Underneath, in a steady throng, people passed incessantly, walking as if under compulsion, as if they could not stop, as if they had lost the power of altering their direction. It was as though some huge dark animal crawled along the pavement, a yoke on its neck, and as it crawled slowly it cheered.

I felt an inarticulate cry rising in my throat, and I wanted to shout to them to stop and to turn back. But in the flowing crowd there was already something like predestination, something which cannot be stopped. And yet occasionally its course was deviated. The throng parted now and then, and in between motor cars passed in regular, short jerks. And in the cars, decorated with national coloured ribbons and white chrysanthemums, were typically Semitic faces. Behind them, in the middle of the road, the human waves closed up again.

I turned off into a by-street. A peasant's little wooden cart came towards me. Swabian peasant women from Hidegkút were being shaken about in it, gay and broad among the milk cans. Suddenly—I did not notice whence they came—three sailors stepped into the cart's path. One caught hold of the horse's bridle while the two others jumped on to the cart. Everything happened in a flash . . . At first the women thought it was a joke, and turned their stupid young faces to each other with a grin. But the sailors meant no joke. With curses they pushed the women off the cart and, as if they were doing the most natural thing in the world, in broad daylight, in the middle of the city, and in sight of a crowd of people, they calmly drove off with somebody else's property. The whip cracked and the little cart went off in rapid jerks. Only then did the women realize what had happened. With loud shrieks they called for help and pointed where the cart had gone to. But the street was lazy and cowardly and did not come to the rescue. Men passed by, shrinking from contact with other people's troubles, as if these were infectious.

It was all so helpless and ugly. It seemed to me that all of us who passed there had lost something. I dared not follow up the trend of my thoughts . . .

Under the porch of the next house two ruffians attacked a young officer. One of them had a big carving knife in his hand. They howled threats. A stick rose and the lieutenant's cap was knocked off his head. Dirty hands snatched him by the throat. The knife moved near his collar . . . the stars were cut off it. The cross of his order and the gold medal on his chest jangled together. The mob roared. The little lieutenant stood bareheaded in the middle of the circle, his face as white as snow. He said nothing, did not even defend himself, only his shoulders shook convulsively. With a clumsy movement, like a child who starts weeping, he passed the back of his left hand across his eyes. Poor little lieutenant! I noticed now that his right sleeve was empty to the shoulder.

Even then nothing happened. The people again pretended not to see, as if they were glad that it had not been their turn . . . Everything seemed confused and vague, like a half-waking fever-dream in the reality of which the dreamer does not believe, though he cannot help moaning under its influence.

What was happening there? . . . In front of the Garrison Commander's building, under some bare trees, some soldiers were holding open a large red, white and green flag. At first I thought they were at play. Then I saw that an unkempt, bandy-legged little man was cutting out the crown from above the coat-of-arms with his pocket-knife. And they held it out for him! . . . I felt as if I had been burnt, and turned my head away so that nobody might see my face. A little further on the declaration of the Social Democratic Party stared at me from a wall:

> "Fellow workers. Comrades! The egotism of class rule has driven the country with inevitable fatality into revolution. The troops who have joined the National Council have occupied without bloodshed the principal places of the capital, the Post Office, the Telephone Exchanges and the Town Hall, on Wednesday night, and have sworn allegiance to the National Council. Workers! Comrades! Now it is your turn! The counter revolution will undoubtedly attempt to regain power. You must demonstrate that you are on the side of your soldier brethren. Out into the streets! Stop all work!
>
> *The Hungarian Social Democratic Party.*"

This poster made a curious impression on me: it was as if a monstrous lie had proclaimed the truth about itself. The party which was striving for the rule of the working-class orders in its first declaration: "Stop all work!" After such a beginning, what will it order to-morrow—and after?

People came towards me: workmen who were not workmen, who no longer do any work; soldiers who were not soldiers, who no longer obey. In this foul atmosphere nothing is any longer what it seems. The many red, white and green flags on the houses are no longer our flags; no longer are they the nation's colours. Only the chrysanthemums remain true flowers of the graveyard.

I went on slowly, but suddenly I stopped again: on the glass window of an obscure little tobacconist's shop, among the newspapers exposed for sale, appeared a sickly, crushed-strawberry coloured poster, which proclaimed in red "Long live the National Council." And then, as if some loathsome skin-disease had infected the houses, appeared more and more red posters, and their colour became bolder and bolder. I was informed later that panic-stricken tradespeople had paid two hundred crowns, some even a thousand, into the funds of the National Council for this shop-window insurance.

In the windows of some shops the big poster of the *Népszava** was displayed. In one night the organ of the Social Democrats had penetrated from its slum into the city, and its poster proclaimed from the windows of meek bourgeois shops "Behold the writing!" . . . On the poster was printed in red a naked man lifting his red hammer at the crowd beyond the window. A horror made of blood . . . The thronging crowd never thought that the hammer was lifted to break its head. And the tradesmen never thought that the hairy red hand was on the point of emptying their tills. I noticed that on the poster of evil omen, besides the bloody monster, a red working-man was struggling with a policeman who held him in chains.

A curious picture . . . I now thought of the police of the capital. The day before yesterday it had adhered to Károlyi's National Council. The famous police force of Budapest had forsaken its high ideals of duty and had gone over to the wreckers. Never before did I realize the importance of this betrayal. I shivered. The fog drifted as if the very atmosphere had become unstable. The walls of the houses near me seemed to waver too; and I seemed to hear the cracking of the plaster, as if they also were preparing to collapse. The noise came from the very foundation of things. Something invisible was collapsing in this city already undermined.

"Hungarians" . . . then silence. A little further it went on: "National" . . . then it started again all along the street. My unwilling eyes were reading the posters over and over again.

"National Council" . . . What is this obscure assembly after all? How dare it call itself the council of the nation? Who are those who incite against the state and collect oaths of allegiance for themselves? Who are those who from the room of an hotel appeal to the nation and promise "an immediate Hungarian peace, the equal right of all nations, the League of Nations, the freeing of the world, a social policy which will strengthen the power of the workers" ? . . . They have not got a word for our frontiers established a thousand years! What happens in the background whither our eyes cannot penetrate? Do the secret allies of the Entente work among us, or only our own enemies who, by means of their proclamations, shout in their Ghetto-lingo that "this programme, which is to save Hungary and free the people, has the whole-hearted support of the Hungarian army?"

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* *The People's Voice*, a Social Democratic newspaper.

Who says that? Who proclaims himself the saviour of Hungary in the hour of her greatest peril? Count Michael Károlyi and Rosa Schwimmer? Martin Lovászy, Baron Louis Hatvany-Deutsch, John Hock, Sigmund Kunfi-Kunstätter, Ladislaus Fényes, William Böhm, Count Theodor Batthyány and Louis Bíró-Blau? Dezsö Abraham, Alexander Garbai and Ernest Garami-Grünfeld? Oscar Jászi-Jakobovics, Paul Szende-Schwarz and Mrs. Ernest Müller? Zoltán Jánosi, Louis Purjesz and Jacob Weltner?

Eleven Jews and eight bad Hungarians!

My soul is racked with indescribable pain. Good God, where is the King? Where is Count Hadik and his government, the officers, the still faithful troops? Are there no longer any fists? Is there nobody to strike at all?

After Gödöllö the King now gropes in Vienna. Hadik remains inactive while the fateful hours fly by. The officials do not lay down their pens, but incline their heads meekly under the new yoke. And, worst of all, the military command surrenders its sword without an attempt to draw it. There is no resistance anywhere: dark, underhand forces by careful labour have prepared the ground long ago. They have demolished everything that is Hungarian. And now, one stitch after the other, with deadly rapidity, the fabric that has endured a thousand years is coming undone.

My brain worked feverishly, thoughts galloping madly and seeking desperately for somebody—something. Somebody who could still stem the general ruin. Stephen Tisza! . . . And silently I asked his pardon for having condemned and misunderstood him. How he must suffer now! What must his thoughts be?

Near the church of the Franciscans a thronging crowd pushed me to the wall, so that I could not move. In front of me small urchins wormed themselves like moles through the crowd—Galician boys, with *payes*—locks hanging down in front of their ears—who were present and yet invisible, whose passage was only signalled by the shrinking of people's shoulders, just as the underground road of the mole is marked by the mole-hills above. The boys were distributing poetry printed by the *Népszava*, offering it with humble impudence and thrusting it into the pockets of those who refused to take it.

The air was full of disturbing noises, and cheering was audible from the end of the road. A motor lorry clattered towards the Town Hall, reeling sailors, armed to the teeth, standing upon it with wide-spread legs. Red ribbons floated from their overcoats, and they bellowed songs. A schoolboy was running after the lorry dragging a big rifle behind him on the pavement. Soldiers, students, ragged women, streamed along. In the uproar two gentlemen were pushed to my side near the church wall. One was extremely excited: "I know it from a quite reliable source," he said. "They are looting in the suburbs. The stores too . . . Yesterday Károlyi's agents armed the workmen of the arsenal. Thirty thousand armed workmen! At the railway station the mob has disarmed the soldiers."

"There is not a word of truth in all that," answered the other. "There is order everywhere. Post Office, telephone exchanges . . . The railwaymen have declared for the National Council. The whole press is with it, and so is public opinion . . . The situation has been quietly cleared. As soon as Károlyi's government is formed there will be order . . . Lovászy, Kunfi, Jászi, Garami . . . We must resign ourselves. None but Károlyi can get us a speedy good peace."

"How do you know?"

"Well, the newspapers . . . Then Károlyi has made a statement. He has great connections with the Entente."

I lost all patience and could listen no more, so sought a passage in the crowd. The throng became

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS

thinner, and a drunken soldier staggered past me. An officers' patrol came out from a street and stood in the soldier's way. Every man of it was a Jew. One of them shouted harshly : "In the name of the Soldiers' Council!" and the drunkard submitted reluctantly.

Now I remembered: some days ago I had heard that Károlyi's men were organizing soldiers' and workmens' councils. These councils meet in conclave at night in schoolrooms, lecture halls. And this in Hungary! Here, in our midst . . . I shuddered from head to foot. "In the name of the Soldiers' Council!" It seemed as if Trotski's Russia had shouted into the streets of Pest.

Near my head a half-torn poster rustled in the wind. "To the Nation." . . . Tattered, Archduke Joseph's cry of alarm died on the grimy wall. I looked quickly behind me. Does anybody besides me read it? No, nobody stops. And yet, how many people were about? And the crowd increased. It was as though the city had for years devoured countless Galician immigrants and now vomited them forth in sickness. How sick it was! Syrian faces and bodies, red posters and red hammers whirled round in it. And freemasons, feminists, editorial offices, Galileans, night cafés came to the surface—and the ghetto sported cockades of national colours and chrysanthemums.

As though it were beneath some wicked enchantment, the invisible part of the town has now become visible. It has come forth from the darkness to take what it has long claimed as its own. The gratings of the gutters have been removed. The drains vomit their contents and the streets are invaded by their stench. The filthy odour of unaired dwellings spreads. Doors are thrown open that till now have been kept closed.

Russia! Great, accursed mystery . . . Did it begin there in the same way? . . . I breathed with repugnance and drew myself together so that none might touch me in passing.

Presently I met an armed patrol. Though the soldiers wore ribbons of the national colours I still felt a stranger to them, for they have already sworn allegiance to the National Council . . . They looked shabby and bore chrysanthemums in the muzzles of their rifles. From a window a woman of Oriental corpulence threw white flowers to them.

A young girl came along, a Hungarian. She distributed chrysanthemums and smiled, and her shaded eyes shone like a child's: "Long live independent Hungary!" I stared at her. There are some like this too. Many, perhaps very many. They live the glorious revolution of 1848 in this infamous parody, and dream of the realization of Kossuth's dreams. Poor wretches! They are even more unfortunate than I am.

The girl offered me a flower and talked some nonsense about Petöfi. I wanted to tell her to give it up and go home, that she had been deceived and it was all lies; but my efforts were in vain, I could not pronounce a single word. I stumbled over the edge of the pavement, my feet seemed leaden . . . A bucket stood in front of me with a big brush in it. I looked up. A weedy youth was spreading paste over the wall, and a new poster glared at me. The people stood around and craned their necks.

> "Soldiers! You have proved yourselves the greatest heroes within the last twenty-four hours, don't soil the honours you have gained . . . Abstain from intoxicating liquors . . . Obey your comrades who have volunteered to maintain order. With patriotic, cordial greetings,
>
> HELTAI,
> *Town Commandant.*"

"And who is that, now?" people asked each other.

"The Commander of the troops?"

"Is he the Heltai who is the son of Adolph Hoffer?"

"To be sure!" I heard behind my back.

The unkempt crowd laughed.

"Paul Kéri and Göndör got him nominated by the National Council."

Paul Kéri, whose name used to be Krammer, and Francis Göndör, whose real name was Nathan Krausz, two radical newspaper scribes, decide who is to command the troops of the Hungarian capital! And it is on Heltai, the son of Adolph Hoffer, that their choice falls.

VICTOR HELTAI *alias* HOFFER,

REVOLUTIONARY COMMANDER OF THE

PAUL KÉRI *alias* KRAMMER,

ONE OF COUNT KÁROLYI'S

Wild fury, hopeless despair, came over me. I wanted to shout for help, like the Swabian women whom I had seen robbed. But who would have listened to me and my misery? They might have laughed, or they might have arrested me. The street moved, lived, hummed, but it was not conscious. For a time I stared at the people, then I set my teeth. Was it I who was mad, or they? And I went on.

In front of the Astoria Hotel the crowd stopped. After its secret sittings in Count Theodor Batthyány's palace Károlyi's National Council pitched its tent here, till it might take possession of the conquered Town Hall. Near the hotel innumerable carriages and motors were waiting. Flags flew from the building and through its revolving door, which reminded one of a bank, men of the stock-exchange type went in and out. There was no policeman anywhere, though the crowd was increasing dangerously. The monster which had crawled in from the suburbs was reclining against the wall of the building, leaving a muddy, smirched trail behind it. Its head rose under the porch: a man stood on the others' shoulders. His face was red and he waved his hat violently as he shouted:

"Hadik has got the sack . . . Károlyi is Prime-Minister!"

"Somebody is going to make a speech," a little Jew girl said and tried to press forward. Over the porch an ugly fat man appeared between the flags. "Eugene Landler!" shouted the girl in rapture. A soldier thrust her aside. "What's he got to do with it? In the barracks, last night, those who spoke were at any rate Hungarians—a chap called Martin Lovászy and one called Pogány. They had darned big mouthpieces, but they had the gift of the gab!" The crowd hummed like a boiling kettle. "Speak up, hear! hear!" All looked upward.

A voice from the porch fell into the listening ears. I stood far away, on the other side of the road, so only incoherent words reached me:

". . . an independent Hungary . . . democracy . . . social reforms . . . International platform . . . In the interest of foreigners . . . The gentle-folk have driven us to the slaughter-house!"

"Well, that's just the place for that fat one," said the soldier with disgust. Those near him began to laugh, and a man who appeared to be an artisan screwed up his lips and gave a shrill whistle.

"That'll do. Say something new! Shut up!" some shouted towards the porch.

Then something unexpected happened. A young Jew threw the name of Tisza into the crowd. He threw it there, just as if by accident.

"He caused the war! Long live Károlyi! To death with Tisza!" The same thing was shouted from the other corner, and a hoarse voice exclaimed:

"Long live the revolution!"

I shuddered. It was for the first time that I heard it thus, openly, in the street. Rigid white faces appeared under the entrances. But the cry died away. It found no echo.

"Down with the King!" This appealed to the mob. It was new, hitherto none had dared to touch this. The rabble snatched at what it heard and vomited it back with a vengeance. And the repulsive chorus was led by the young man who had previously mentioned the name of Tisza.

The news-boys of a mid-day paper came shouting down the street: "The National Council has proclaimed the Republic!"

"Long live the Republic . . ." This was only an attempt, but it failed. Nobody became enthusiastic. Someone shouted: "To Gödöllö!"

A Versailles, à Versailles! The starving mob of Paris shouted this a hundred and thirty years ago, and now in Budapest fat bank clerks exclaim: "Let us go to Gödöllö!" Nobody moved. It is said that ten thousand armed workmen are marching on it . . . I burned with shame. This news was not invented by Hungarian minds. Armed men, against children! It is not true . . . At any rate, the King's children have made good their escape . . . I only heard half of what was said. Poor little children! . . .

As if I had been chased I turned to go down the boulevard towards the bridge. By now armed sailors were already stopping motor-cars in the streets, thrusting the occupants out and driving off in the cars. It was done quickly. Big lorries

EUGENE LANDLER,

HOME SECRETARY. LATER A COMMANDER
IN THE RED ARMY.

(*To face p.*

filled with armed soldiers raced across the bridge. Some were even hanging on to the steps. Shots were fired, and a drunkard sang in a husky voice: "Long live the Revolution, long live drink . . ."

The whole thing was humiliating and disgusting. If only I could escape from it, so that I might see nothing, hear nothing! I longed for home—home, out there in the woods, among the hills.

At the entrance of the tunnel that passes under the castle hill a soldier was offering his government rifle for sale and asking five crowns for it. Another offered his bayonet.

On the other side of the tunnel I felt as if I had emerged at the antipodes. There the town was quiet, so quiet that I could hear the echo of my steps in the streets of Buda. The single-storeyed houses cuddled peacefully on the side of the hill. There people will not know what has happened till to-morrow, when they will read it over their breakfast.

In one of the low windows some flower-pots stood between the curtains. A clock struck in the room. and a young girl started watering the flowers with a little red watering-can. Doubtless she watered them yesterday at the same hour and life will be the same for her to-morrow. Meanwhile, on the other bank of the Danube they shout: Long live the revolution! Revolution . . . Madness! What good can a revolution do now? Nobody takes it seriously, not even those who made it. Madness! It did me good to repeat the word, and I began to take heart. Nothing will come of it. The Hungarian is not a revolutionary—he fights for freedom. Every commotion in our history of a thousand years has been a war of liberation. And freedom has come: independence has fallen from its own accord into the nation's lap . . .

A light already shone in one of the little houses. Under the hanging lamp, round a circular table, people sat peacefully. They knew of nothing . . . In one of the yards someone played an accordion. The homely, suburban music, the fatigue of my long silent walk, weakened the awful impressions of the other shore. All that had tortured me was disappearing, and my thoughts were only of hanging lamps and accordions.

The density of the mist increased with the evening, and when I reached the old military cemetery it had nearly absorbed the outlines of all objects. Over the collapsing graves, between the many little rotting wooden crosses, the tombstones dissolved like ghosts in the fog. In Pest by now the mist would be a yellow reeking fog, while here it became a thing of beauty. Nowadays everything that is beautiful in the country turns to filth in Pest.

Again I forgot to pay attention to the road, and my thoughts harped on what I had lately seen.

It was impossible that a few slums of a single town should make a revolution when the whole country was against it . . . Then, I don't know how, I came to think of *The Possessed*—Dostoevski's wonderful novel. I remembered a reception which I had attended last winter. We talked of Russia, Lenin and Bolshevism, and I asked one of Michael Károlyi's relations if Károlyi had ever read that book.

"Of course, and he loves it, too. He lent it to me to read."

There had been curious rumours about Károlyi for some time.

"Is he learning from it how to make a revolution?" I asked, but received no answer.

I was tired and walked on slowly. Along the road the old, leafless chestnut trees came towards me in hazy monotony, and there recurred to my memory the little Russian town in Dostoevski's book, into which with his genius he has crowded a picture of Russia as a whole. Young revolutionaries, back from Switzerland, meet accidentally in the little town. The demoniacal leader of these morbid youths, craving for power, destroys the existing order and produces chaos. Consumptive students, alcoholics, syphilitic degenerates, prospective suicides, cracked intellects, murderers and despairing cowards gather round him and he forms a group of five from the select. And then he convinces them that innumerable similar groups are waiting with eagerness for the signal to revolt. When his five men hesitate he tricks them to commit a murder, so that the knowledge of common guilt should make his slaves mutually suspicious of each other. At his order they will raise the pyre . . . The actors of the revolution are together and the primal conditions are ready. And then dissolution, terror and panic will come, and the frightened, despoiled people will be prepared to suffer anything and to recognise anybody as their omnipotent master who can create order, whatever that order may be. "We take the sly ones with us, and lord it over the simple." That is the idea of Dostoevski's hero. The eleven internationalists of the National Council think the same. They too share the power with the cunning ones and use Károlyi as a stepping-stone to power. After all Károlyi is nothing but the tool of this Council. Who the demon is, I do not yet know.

Up, to power . . . But they will not get it! A few resolute officers with a handful of soldiers can restore order. The National Council is nothing but an isolated "group of five." There are no others. If its members are arrested, the mud they have stirred up will settle down; they are not united by any common honour, by any common crime.

Napoleon once said that with a few guns he could have stopped the great French Revolution. For these, a volley of rifle fire would do. But where is he who can command it to-day?

I came to the bridge over the Devil's Ditch. In the mist the bridge looked as if it did not rest on the banks. Above the depth of the fog it floated mysteriously in space. Behind a drab amorphous veil the forest on the slope of the hills seemed a dreamy enigma; the trees by the road: lacelike blossoms of mist on the background of the falling night.

No sound reached me. Only some pebbles, displaced by my steps, clattered behind me. A branch cracked in the forest; it made me think of a skeleton wringing its hands in impotent despair . . . And if they don't arrest Károlyi and his accomplices to-night? Dostoevski's novel came again to my mind and from among my thoughts there emerged the shout of a wicked, shrill voice: "To death with Tisza!" The penetrating mist now chilled me to the marrow. I felt cold all through . . . "Death to Tisza!" It rang in my ears all the time. Good God, for how many years has this savage cry been prepared by blinded politicians, by frivolous political *salons*, by nearly all the press, in barracks, in factories, in the *aula* of the University, in the market place, between cellar and attic, in every human den! For how many years! The work was done by ruthless agitators, and now it is crowned with an awful success. In the eyes of the crowd he would not be a criminal who attempted the life of Tisza. His life is outlawed. The crowd is already prepared for the event. The mob in the street may clamour without risk or protest for the life of this man: "To death with Tisza!" I could not stop the fearful cry from ringing in my ears.

For days I had spoken to nobody who belonged to Tisza's circle. Was he in town? Had he gone? If only he had gone away! . . . And I walked along the mountain path while the hoarse cry followed me, like a vagabond with evil intent. Try as I would I was unable to shake it off.

Night had fallen and the mist had become dense round our house. The fort opposite had disappeared and the edge of the mountain had become invisible. From far away, in the direction where the town lay, the report of firearms was audible.

In the cold darkness the house appeared so lonely, as if it had been expelled from communion with the rest of the world. The bonds that had tied human fates together have been severed, and we know of nought but what is going on in ourselves. The house was enclosed in a huge, grey wall of mist.

In the hall I tried to telephone, but could get no answer from the exchange. The receiver buzzed meaninglessly.

All at once rifle shots sounded from the hills, then came nearer. Suddenly a shot rang out at the bottom of our garden. Another. That one was nearer. Then a bullet struck the chestnut tree under my window. It had a curious effect upon me, for an instant later it seemed as if the whole thing had happened to someone else—as if I did not really live it, but just read about it in a book.

I extinguished the lamp, so that my lighted window should not serve as a target, and then groped my way in the dark to the ground floor, to my mother's room. A narrow band of light showed on the floor under the door. As she was awake I went in. She was sitting quietly in one of the uncomfortable, high-backed, old-fashioned chairs. At the sound of the opening door she turned and our eyes met. For a time we remained silent. The firing outside had stopped too.

"They seem to have stopped shooting," said my mother, after a while, in that wonderful quiet way which was always reflected on her countenance whenever life treated her harshly.

"It will be over sometime; we've got to live through it somehow," I said, just to say something.

My mother moved wearily. "Be careful you do not catch cold. The night is cool . . ."

Suddenly there was a sound of voices on the road. I remembered something I had been told. Burglars . . .

"We ought to hide our money, mother, at any rate. If it were taken we could get no more under the present circumstances."

For a moment, a moment only, my mother looked at me with consternation. Then: "Of course." And her mind too had crossed the abyss that separated the old world of safety and protection from the new world of insecurity, lawlessness, and uncertainty.

I slipped the money under the carpet in the dark hall. Twice I stopped. Someone was speaking in the road, near the gate. Voices were audible, long consultations . . . Steps withdrew. I went carefully up stairs and took care that nobody should observe that the house was awake.

My room seemed to have become chilled while I was downstairs. The blackness engulfed me as in some deep black sea, and I shivered. For a long time I remained standing in the same place. An incessant sound of death came to me from outside: the chestnut tree under the window was shedding its leaves. Resignation. The time of many falling leaves. The eve of November . . . The air was filled with low, rustling, soughing, ghostly sounds. It was as if a crowd walked stealthily in the garden and the forest stole secretly away.

Hopeless distress, as I had never felt it before, came over me. Autumn is departing from the hills this night, and by the morrow it will be gone. Then winter comes irresistibly, dragging at its heels snow, cold, frost, suffering, the unknown and perhaps the impossible.

What is in store for us?

In the darkness, like the ticking of time, incessantly, the leaves fell with a faint sound. A dog whined beyond the garden, whined in an eerie, terrifying way, as if somebody had died in its master's house . . .

Despair overcame me. It was not only a dog that whined its lament: it was the night that wept over Hungary.

CHAPTER II

November 1st.

In the morning I heard that Tisza had been murdered.

The telephone rang in the corridor, sharply, aggressively, as if the town was shouting out to us among the woods. It was with reluctance that I put the receiver to my ear.

The ringing stopped and I heard only that meaningless buzzing at a distance. It lasted for some time while I stared through the window at the little ice-house in the garden. At last there was silence and I recognised the voice of my brother Géza. He spoke from town, enquired after mother, and asked how we had passed the night. In town they had been shooting all night long, and armoured cars had rushed through the streets. And then he said something I could not understand clearly.

I felt a strange reluctance to understand. I began to be afraid of what was coming, of hearing something which, once known, could never be altered again. The presentiment of catastrophe took possession of me.

"But what happened?"

"Poor Stephen Tisza . . ."

I still looked out into the garden at the reed-thatched roof of the ice-house, staring at a reed which had become detached by some winter storm. I stared at it till my eyes ached, as if I were clinging to it. It was only a reed, but now everything to which one could cling was but a reed. Suddenly the garden vanished. The window disappeared, and tears fell from my eyes.

I heard the voice of my brother again. He concluded from my silence that I had not understood what he said, so he repeated it: "He is the only victim of the revolution. Soldiers killed him. They penetrated into his house and . . . in the presence of his wife and of Denise Almássy they shot him dead."

"The scoundrels!"

Communication was suddenly broken off.

Poor human creature! Forsaken, lonely, deserted man! Nobody protected him. In his greatest hour, women alone stood by his side: it is always a woman who is at the foot of the rood. My awful presentiment of Tisza's martyrdom came back to me in a shudder. How he must have suffered from the thought that his usefulness had gone, how his brilliant brain must have rebelled against annihilation, how his remaining vitality must have revolted. Stephen Tisza was dead! What an awful void these words created. Nobody was left to bear every burden in Hungary, to bear all blame, all responsibility. The weight of the responsibility which he alone bore falls to pieces with his death. Till now, one man bore them; will the whole country be able to bear the burden? Even whilst I asked this question I felt as if something which I had never felt before had fallen upon my shoulders: my share of the terrible, invisible load. Small legatees of a great testator . . . I, others, every Hungarian.

Poor Tisza! In his good qualities and in his shortcomings he was typical of his race. He was faithful and God-fearing, honest, credulous and obstinate, proud, brave, calumnied and lonely, just like old Hungary. In my mind his qualities were so tightly knitted together that I could not separate them.

He was killed! Many will not understand the portent to Hungary of that phrase. And yet Tisza's corpse lies exposed in every Hungarian home, from one end of the country to the other, in every house, every farm, every cottage, even there where they do not know where they laugh.

The newsboy opened the door and threw the newspapers into the hall. The papers flew in disorder over the floor. I said nothing about it, though he seemed to expect some remark and looked back with

Photo. Koller, Budapest.

COUNT STEPHEN TISZA.

(*To face p. 20.*)

an impudent grin to see the effect his action had produced. Yesterday he would not have dared to do such a thing. To-day the change has affected him too. How quickly it spreads, faster than civilization! That would take years to cover the road.

I picked the papers up. Not one had the customary black margin of mourning. A significant omission on the part of newspapers of Tisza's old party; it showed the restraining influence of some unknown power. His death was reported in neutral words, hidden in some obscure corner, while one of the papers indulged in a riot of adulation for the National Council and another shrieked victory over the success of the revolution which it had prepared. It wrote cynically about Tisza and sneered at his widow. It referred to the King as Charles Hapsburg and proclaimed in its columns the republic for Hungary.

At last the Hungarian Liberal and Radical press has removed its mask and displayed its countenance, which had never been Hungarian, in all its nakedness. But to ponder these things was unbearable, and the reality of our misfortune burdened my soul anew with anguish. How shall I tell mother? I crossed the hall slowly, hesitatingly, and went to her room. As soon as I opened the door she looked at me inquiringly, as though she were expecting something.

"Well, what has happened?"

I searched for words to minimise the shock, and then, I don't know how, I blurted out: "Tisza has been murdered!" The words sounded sharp and metallic, like the stroke of an axe when it fells a living tree which in its fall clears a gap in the forest.

I shall never forget the sudden, painful alteration in my mother's face. She, who always managed to look collected, lifted both hands to her forehead. "What is to become of us?" she asked, in sobs rather than words. I had never seen her in tears before, and the grief that swept over me almost stopped my breath: I was so unprepared for her sorrow that I could utter no word of consolation. Silently I kissed her hand. Then for a long time we remained silent.

"How did it happen?" she asked at last, in a voice so weary that it was as if she had travelled a great distance during our silence.

" Soldiers . . . " and I handed the papers to her. I glanced at the page of one of them: these lines met my eyes: " . . . Glorious Revolution. The National Council has taken over the government of Hungary . . . Naturally the constitution is no longer what it was. The King has handed all his powers to Károlyi, so that he may maintain order in the land." I turned the page. " One detachment of soldiers after the other declares its adherence to the National Council. The communal authorities have submitted to the National Council. So have the Exchange, the railwaymen, the men of the electric trams . . . Count Julius Andrássy, the last common Minister for Foreign Affairs, has resigned!"

News followed news in a topsy-turvy way. Vienna —in Austria too the old order has passed away. A Social Democrat called Renner has been made Chancellor. The Social Democratic deputy, Victor Adler, has become Foreign Secretary.

I read further, then my eyes were arrested by a proclamation of the National Council: "Our beflowered and bloodless revolution will bind the nation with eternal gratitude to the men who have worked disinterestedly at its reconstruction." I looked at the end of the paper: a notice in small type caught my attention: " Report of the General Staff: As early as the 29th of October the Higher Command had established communication with the Italian Commander in Chief " . . . "Trieste has been occupied by an English fleet " . . . " The King has ordered that the Fleet, the naval institutions and all other things pertaining to the Navy, shall be gradually handed over to the local Committees of Zágráb and of Pola . . ."

Every word of the papers strikes one in the face. Insult, shame and degradation. And in face of this maddening conglomeration of defeats, of this heartless report of Hungary's collapse, there is Michael Károlyi's order: " The National Council orders that on the occasion of the people's victory, which has for ever abolished war, the whole of Budapest and all provincial towns are to be beflagged."

My mother has thrown her paper aside·

"Have you read the circular by which the National Council informs the people of Hungary that Budapest has taken the power into its own hands and that 'not a single drop of Hungarian blood has been shed?' Tisza's blood is not Hungarian blood in the eyes of Károlyi and his friends."

Even as she spoke, on the last page of one of the papers I came across the following:

"Count Stephen Tisza has been sacrificed to the cause of freedom . . ."

"They hid that so carefully that I could not find it," said my mother.

I read aloud:

"At the villa at 35 Hermina Road an officer and a civilian appeared on the morning of the murder. They demanded admittance. Tisza received them in his study. 'What do you want?' he asked, and the civilian answered: 'Are you hiding that swine of a Czech attorney who is upholding the accusation against me?' 'I don't hide anybody,' replied Tisza.

"The strangers left hurriedly . . . It is more than probable that they only came to spy if Tisza was at home, because the rumour had spread in town that he had left Pest!"

Then followed a remarkably short and cynical account of the details of the murder, every word of which showed clearly that the writer of the article wanted to avoid anything that might raise pity or sympathy in favour of the victim. The report continued:

"During the day a thick crowd had gathered in the vicinity of the villa. In the evening about a quarter past six eight infantrymen climbed over the high railings of the garden and crept across the lawn to the house. They entered by the back door. They quietly disarmed the police who were in charge of Tisza's safety, and penetrated into the hall. The footman tried to stop them. Hearing the noise, Stephen Tisza, his wife, and his niece, the Countess Denise Almássy, came out. Tisza held a revolver in his hand.

"The soldiers began by reproaching him: 'We have been fighting five years because of you . . . You are the cause of the destruction of our country!

. . . You were always a scoundrel.' Then they shouted at him to put his revolver down.

"'I will not,' said Tisza, 'you are armed too.'

"'Put it down,' a tall, fair young man aged about thirty shouted.

"'I won't.'

"'Then let the women stand aside."

"'We will not," said they.

"Tisza retired a few steps and put the revolver down.

"'Now what do you want?' said he.

"'You are the cause of the war.'

"'I know what the war has done to us, and I know how much blood has flowed; but I am not the cause of it.'

"'I have been a soldier for four years. Innumerable families have perished because of your wickedness. Now you must pay for it.'

"'I am not the cause of it.'

"'Let the women stand aside!' No answer. 'It is you who have brought this awful catastrophe about, and now the day of reckoning has come.'

"Three shots were fired. Tisza fell forward on the carpet. He was hit by two bullets: one in the shoulder, the other in the abdomen. The third grazed the cheek of Denise Almássy.

"'They have killed me,' said Tisza; 'God's will be done.'

"While the victim was writhing in agony the soldiers hurried away. It is not known to what regiment they belonged."

Thus far the reporter's account. My mother looked at me interrogatively for an instant and then shook her head sadly.

"Something has been omitted from that account. It all sounds very improbable. Hungarian soldiers don't kill in the presence of women."

"It is a psychological impossibility," I said; "such an account can have sprung only from the imagination of a Budapest reporter. Soldiers from the front would not talk politics if they wanted to kill. They might have rushed in and stabbed Tisza, but such a cold-blooded, cowardly, premeditated murder is not in the nature of Hungarians. It must have been very different."

"However it was," my mother sighed, "it is terrible to think that it could happen. Poor Countess Tisza!"

A short notice at the foot of the paper said something about her—Count Michael Károlyi had sent her the following telegram: "It is my human duty to express my deep sympathy over the tragical death of my greatest political opponent.

My mother was horrified at this.

"How could he be so shameless as to intrude like that!"

Indeed, this impudence sounded like a sneer at Tisza's memory, and in any case it was wanton cruelty to the faithful, heroic woman who knew full well that for many years Károlyi had with cruel hatred incited the masses against her husband.

The origin of this hatred was deep and irreparable, for it sprang not from a divergence of ideas but from the physical disparities which resulted from Károlyi's infirmities. Michael Károlyi, a stunted degenerate afflicted with a cleft palate, a haughty, hopelessly conceited, spoilt and unintelligent child of fortune, could never forgive the simple nobleman Tisza that he was gifted, strong, clean and healthy, every inch a man, powerful, and in power. It was the hatred of envious deformity for strength, health and success. Those about him, for ends of their own, made capital out of this. Some of his satellites reported several of his utterances on this subject. In fact Károlyi made no secret of his hatred for Tisza.

Many times he was heard to assert that he would not rest till he had ruined him. Could he have done so, he would have sent his telegram of condolence to the widow of his "greatest political opponent" at an earlier date, namely when the discussion of the new standing order of the Hungarian parliament took place. On that occasion he challenged the half blind Tisza, who was about to undergo an operation, to a duel in the same week when he, Tisza, had already fought two others, one against Count Aladár Széchényi, the other against the Markgrave Pallavicini. On this occasion Károlyi's hatred was fanned to a white heat, for Tisza, a master of fence, assessed his adversary no more seriously on the duelling ground than in politics: he played for a little with him and finally thrashed him with the flat of his sword till he collapsed.

Idly I turned the paper. Another notice attracted my attention: "In the name of the National Council Count Michael Károlyi, Dr. Joseph Pogány and Louis Magyar order that on the first of November all theatres of Budapest shall give gala performances."

Gala performances! Budapest and all Hungarian towns to be beflagged! And Hungary struggling in agony and Stephen Tisza on the catafalque! . . . A wave of indescribable bitterness swept over me. Oh! that I could escape from it all and leave it far behind me!

It was strange that at such a moment I could hear the hissing of the damp wood in the fireplace and could see that Alback's little old portrait was hanging crooked on the wall. I got up and put it straight. Out of doors the mist was drifting. Drops condensed on the window and trickled slowly down. The mist was noiselessly shedding tears over miles and miles.

When I left my mother's room I met my brother Béla in the hall. He stood with his back to me, staring fixedly out into the mist. His sword with the belt twisted round it and his officer's cap lay on the table. The cockade of the cap was still in its place.

I looked at him silently for some moments, and a deep pity filled me. He too was one of the hundreds of thousands. For him it was even worse than for us . . . As a lieutenant of reserve he joined his regiment of lancers on the first of August, 1914. Since then he had served with many branches of the service, often in the infantry, till at last, after long years of war, he was invalided home gravely ill from under Jamiano. On the banks of the Drava, in Przemysl, the battle of Lemberg, the wintry Carpathians, Besarabia, and that hell of rocks the Carso—the road of many Hungarian deaths, of much Hungarian honour. He had traversed it from end to end. And now he stood here, like an old man, looking into the fog, with his sword lying idle.

Only when I called him by name did he notice that I was in the room, and as he turned I noticed that his coat dangled as if it were hanging on a skeleton.

COUNT MICHAEL KÁROLYI.

(*To face p.* 26.)

On his drawn face deep lines extended to the corners of his mouth. He seemed highly strung and started to say one thing, then stopped and said something else. "I started for town but could not stand the walk so I came back." While he spoke I felt that he was thinking of something else all the time. Suddenly he collapsed into a chair, his elbows on the table. "There, in Pest, deserters and demagogues. They have suspended me, and shirking defeatists are the leaders and laugh at us. The new government glorifies cowardice and dishonour. We have come to this. Why, then, what was the good of it all?" Through his voice spoke the voice of four years' suffering, and a tear trickled down his pallid cheeks. Suddenly he stretched out his thin hand for his cap, and looked eagerly with bent head at the cockade on it. "They won't tear mine off." He stopped abruptly and looked up to me: "You have heard what happened yesterday in Hermina road?"

"I know."

He got up and returned to the garden door, and motionless stared out into the fog.

In the evening a neighbouring farmer came over. He was a faithful old friend of ours, and now, in his own simple way, he tried to give proof of his devotion, as if to offer reparation for the wrongs we had suffered. He asked us if we wanted any vegetables. "Just say the word, there are a few left in our garden." And his thoughtful kindness impressed me more with the change that had taken place in our social order than any annoying brutality of the street could have done.

Then we talked of other things. He spoke of Tisza and told us with many lamentations that they were still shooting in town, and that soldiers terrorised the people from big motor lorries. One railway station had been pillaged. Another was on fire, so a man told him who had just been there. The military stores had been stormed by the mob. Barrels of petrol were rolled into the street, smashed, and the petrol set on fire as it poured out.

Soon after the farmer left us, the door bell rang, and my brothers and sisters came, one after the other, up the garden path. Whenever the door was opened the mist floated in from the darkness like smoke, and the new arrivals stamped on the mat for a moment or two to rid themselves of the mud. Slowly we gathered round our mother like birds in a storm.

A fire was burning in the hall, its light playing over the beamed roof, glinting here and there from the oak staircase which rose high against the wall. It came and went, flared up a little, flickered, and then died down.

When daylight had disappeared from the mullioned panes of the window the shaded lamp was lit on the round table. My mother prepared tea, just as if things were as they used to be, when we came home chilled. Then she sat down in her usual place, in the corner of the green velvet couch. Above her, on the wall, was a fine old etching. It was an old friend of my childhood, full of stories—*Le garde de chasse.* How I loved to look at it on Sunday afternoons when it hung in my grandmother's room! Since then its old mistress had gone, so had her room—indeed the very house had been demolished. The picture alone remained. In the foreground on the edge of a wood, with raised fists and a huge gun on his shoulder, stands the aged keeper, in an old fashioned beaver and high shirt collar. Cowed and cringing are two little children, who have been caught in the act of stealing firewood. And now while the voices of my brothers were humming in my ears I was struck by something I had never noticed before. How this picture had gone out of date! Justice has altered. Nowadays the law of "mine, thine, his" is proclaimed in a new shape.

Thine—is mine, his—is ours! This is the teaching of the new leaders of the people and the foundation of their power. For many thousands of years the crowd has learned nothing with such ease, and nothing has ever made it the slaves of its masters with greater speed.

Involuntarily I glanced at the opposite wall. Another picture was over the other couch: a cheap, coloured engraving of Ofen-Pest, the ancient little town. People still passed across the Danube by the floating bridge; in its narrow little streets real red, white, and green flags were floating, and in their shadow Louis Kossuth and Alexander Petöfi made a real war for freedom. How all this has changed!

The kettle was singing, and from the fireplace a pleasant warmth, scented with the smell of pinewood, penetrated the room. The silver and the cut glass shone on the white tablecloth. I sat snugly in the armchair. Here things were still as of old, and I felt a glow of gratitude towards the home which now was no more taken for granted but appeared as an island amid the flood.

Did the others feel this too? I looked round. All were unusually silent. Now and then someone said a word which fell like a pebble in a silent pond. Worry was written on all faces. During the long war, among the many terrible misfortunes, I had never noticed despair in my family. We never gave up hope. Our faith that Hungary would survive whatever happened had never altered.

"She has been betrayed!" And we returned to the fate of Tisza. We decided between us that we would all go to his funeral. But when will it be? Nobody knew. My mother had been sitting for a long time silently in her corner when she said in a low voice, as if speaking to herself:

"They killed him . . . killed him. They knew what they did. They have bereft the nation of its head."

We looked at each other.

"And the guilty have escaped without leaving a trace . . . At any rate, they would not have been hurt—the triumphing revolution will provide for all eventualities by a general amnesty." My brother took up the newspaper. "Have you read this? "By request of the National Council the Ministry of Justice has ordered by telegram that all those who are arrested or imprisoned for high treason, lèse majesté, rebellion, violence against the authorities or against private individuals, or incitement to violence, should be released at once!"

The new government could not have pronounced a graver indictment of itself. This amnesty was a free confession of its ends, its means and its guilt. From this moment Michael Károlyi and his National Council appeared to us in the rôle of the accused at the bar of judgment.

"Criminals," said my brother-in-law. "Here in Pest they have anticipated the ordinance. Two days ago they set free the Galileists accused of high treason."

"It is said that Countess Károlyi herself went to fetch them."

"Yesterday they liberated in triumph all the deserters . . . Only a few hours before the assassination of Stephen Tisza a commission came with the written order of the National Council to the jail to free all political prisoners, and as the order put it, "all deserving prisoners." The first to rush out of the prison was Lékai-Leitner, the man who recently made an attempt on Tisza's life. He addressed a speech to the assembled mob and explained without being interfered with why the principal contriver of the war, Tisza, should be killed. "Let him perish!" he shouted, and the mob cheered while he, protected by the police, incited his comrades in the street to murder."

"Károlyi's National Council must have known of that. Yet they did nothing to protect Tisza. A few hours later his assassins could destroy him without fear of interruption."

I thought of Marat's saying to Barbaroux: "Give me four hundred assassins and I will make the revolution." . . . Into the hands of what a crowd have fallen the fates both of our country and ourselves! High treason and rebellion are no longer crimes, violence is lawful, incitement to it permissible. Assassins can exercise their trade without punishment, and there is no place where one can claim justice. I staggered under the confusing thoughts. I seemed to have lived through something like this once before. Many years ago, on a hot, close summer night, I was awakened by a violent shock. The room swayed, the house tilted backwards and forwards, everything tottered, cracked, collapsed. An earthquake! And when I wanted to grasp something it gave way, moved from its place; nothing seemed firm . . . "Let us fly!" . . . A mad voice shouted it through the night. . . . Fly? On such occasions there is no place whither flight is possible; for miles and miles the earth quakes.

Presently, in order to encourage my mother, I said aloud:

"Everything is not lost yet. The troops will come back from the front. They will restore order. Those who have fought there will not tolerate the rule of deserters and shirkers at home."

"Unfortunately Károlyi's agents have gone to meet them at the front," said my brother-in-law. "And they have taken with them an ample supply of the government's newspapers."

Meanwhile out of doors the fog became as dense as if a morass had swollen up in the valleys. It clung about the windows and coated the panes. My brothers and sisters prepared to go. When we took leave we agreed that as we could hope at any rate for a little more safety in town than here, we would move in as soon as we could procure the necessary vans. The villa stood in a lonely spot among abandoned houses; only my sister Mary, and, on the other side of the ravine, the farmer, lived on the hill besides ourselves. And the woods were full of vagabonds.

"It will be safer . . ."

"It will be equally unsafe everywhere in Hungary," I said while I put my coat on to accompany them a short distance.

When we reached the bottom of the hill shots broke the silence. Rifles answered them, and their echo rolled on between the hills. A white dog, frightened to death, rushed past me like an arrow, his tail between his legs, and his ears pressed tightly back. The caretaker of one of the empty villas, an old Swabian gardener, stood in the gate, smoking his pipe and watching the road.

"Himmelsakrament! . . . The Russians have escaped from the prisoners' camp, that's what people say in the shop. Goodness knows what is going to happen to us . . ."

"False alarms," I said as I passed.

The firing increased every moment.

"Mother will fret," said my sister Mary. We took leave of the others and turned back.

Beyond the Devil's Ditch, where the road starts up the hill, two bullets whistled over our heads. They must have come from the bushes near by, for we could smell the powder. In front of us a human form emerged from the fog. "That one went too low," he muttered. "God guarded me so that it missed me." The stranger had a big collar and wore a soldier's cap. He might have been a non-commissioned officer. "Can one get newspapers down there by the electric tram?" he asked, touching his cap.

"No, they don't sell papers to-day."

The man turned back, and, leaning heavily on his stick climbed the hill slowly behind us. He never spoke, but sighed now and then, and one of his boots tapped curiously on the pavement. Through my thoughts I had heard the tapping for some time before I realized that the poor fellow had an artificial leg.

"It was all in vain," he exclaimed unexpectedly, and his voice sounded even duller than before. I could not see his face, but somehow I felt that this man with a wooden leg was weeping in the dark. That made me think of my brother, and of the others, the cripples, the blind, the sick, the maimed, who all say to-day with a lump in their throat: "it was in vain . . ."

When I reached our garden another shot passed over my head. I pressed myself against the trunk of a tree and waited a little. I seemed to hear my heart beating in the tree. The danger passed by and I went on. The lighted windows of the house shone gently upon the path and beckoned to me, just as they had done the day before, just as they had done on any day when my steps took me home.

When I entered the house I found boxes and trunks in the hall, and my mother was packing. She was putting boxes tied with lilac ribbon into the trunks, her own dear old belongings which she had treasured with so much love throughout a long life. Indefatigable, she went to and fro. She bent down, brought another object, never complaining and astonishingly calm.

Meanwhile the fire on the hearth went out, and the sticky air of the night penetrated through the shutters. The dining-room had become very cold too. We did not dare to make fires: our wood in the cellar was running short and should we fail in our attempt to hire a van, who knew how long we might have to stay here?

Later on I went up into my room and collected my papers. All the time I could hear my mother's steps down below: it was a step that I could recognise among a thousand others. It always sounds as though she drags one of her feet slightly, but she does not do so really, it only sounds like it, and it gives her gait a kind of swaying rhythm. I love to hear it, for it always reminds me of my childhood. Whenever I dreamed anything frightful in my little truckle bed that step would come slowly across the room, and even before it reached me all that was terrifying had disappeared.

On the ground floor a cupboard was opened: the noise sounded like a sigh; then drawers were gliding in and out. Beyond the garden the dogs barked. Now and then violent outbursts of firing rent the hills. But even then my mother's steps never stopped. I could hear them passing quietly backwards and forwards between the trunks in the hall and her room

CHAPTER III

Dawn of November 2nd.

It was long after midnight before my mother's door closed. I hung a silk handkerchief over the lamp so that its light might not be seen from outside and then I went through the letters accumulated on my writing-table. Suddenly a bell rang in the hall. The telephone . . . Who could call so late? What has happened? I ran quickly down the stairs. An unfamiliar voice spoke to me from the unknown. A terrified, strange voice:

"Save yourself! The Russian prisoners have escaped from their camp. Three thousand of them are coming armed. They kill, rob and pillage. They are coming towards the town. They are coming this way . . ."

"But . . ." I wanted to express my thanks, but the voice ceased and was gone. It must have gone on, panting, to awaken and warn the other inhabitants of lonely houses. For an instant my imagination followed the voice as it ran breathless along the wires in the night and shouted its alarm to the sleeping, the waking, the cowardly, the brave. It comes nameless, goes nameless, waits for no thanks, flies on the torn wings of shattered, despised human fellowship.

The Russians are coming . . .

I stood irresolute for a time in the cold passage. What should I do? Every moment life seemed to present new problems. From the dark hall I listened for any sound from my mother's room and looked to see if a light appeared under her door. But all was in darkness. Should I call her, tell her? What good would it be? I walked slowly up the stairs. There was no sound from the room of my brother, who was very ill. They both sleep . . . It is better so. At any rate, it would be impossible for us to descend that soaked, slippery mountain path in the night. And if we could, where should we go? Fly? They said that when there was an earthquake. But where can one find shelter when the earth is quaking everywhere?

When I reached my room I breathed more freely. The lamp was alight, so at least I was spared the addition of more darkness to that already in my heart.

From the covered lamp a ray like that of a thief's lantern fell on the table. I sat down in front of it and rested my head in my hands, a dull weariness behind my brow. It was some time before I overcame this lassitude, and then four words formed themselves on my lips: 'The Russians are coming . . .' The past was stirred, and I remembered the day when I had first heard those words . . .

Hungary did not want war. When it came she faced it honourably, as she had always done for a thousand years . . . In their black Sunday best peasants went through the town. The heels of their high boots resounded sharply on the pavement . . . Young women in bright petticoats, with tears in their eyes, walked hand in hand with their sweethearts, from whom they were about to be parted; old women in shawls, with their handsome sons. Then—the Russians are coming! . . . That was all that was said. But those four words foretold an immense upheaval, coming from the North. The greater half of Europe, part of mysterious dark Asia, moved from their ancient abodes and with a sea of guns and rifles rushed on towards the Carpathians to devour Europe. They poured like an avalanche over the mountain passes, while Humanity held its breath. Such a battle of peoples had never been before.

Years went by. On the Russian fields and swamps, along the Volga and the Don, from the Urals to the Caucasus, on the endless plains of Asia, the nations that had risen in arms were bleeding to death. The empire of the White Czar had bled to death, and that which was left of it became Red, dyed in its own blood . . .

Summer had come many times since the tragic summer of 1914 when the first boys went who never came back again. Dear features now still in death, playmates of my childhood, dead friends of my youth. At the foot of Lublin, on the fields of Sanatova, in the Dukla Pass, among the Polish swamps, in Serbian land, at the Asiago, everywhere flowed blood which was akin to mine. Dead shoots of my ancestral tree! And as you went, so did others too, from year to year, without reprieve. Then the call came to the school-rooms and to the sunny corridors where the aged basked, resting before the eternal rest, from the labours of life.

There was practically not a man nor a youth left in the villages. The black soil was tilled by women, and women gathered the harvest.

Springs were conceived in pain. Summers brought forth their harvests in tears. In the autumnal mists the withered hands of tottering old men held the plough as it followed the silver-grey long-horned oxen. A carriage might travel many miles without passing a single man at work in the fields. All were under foreign skies—or under foreign soil, while the panic-stricken towns were invaded by hordes of Galician fugitives. A new type of buyer appeared in the markets, on the Exchange. The Ghetto of Pest was thronged. Goods disappeared and prices began to soar. Misery stalked with a subdued wail through the land, while the new rich rattled their gold impudently. A part of the aristocracy and the wealth-laden Jewry danced madly in the famished towns, amidst a weeping land.

Now and then dark news came from the distant tempest of blood. Now and then flags of victory were unfurled and the church bells rang for the Te Deum. One morning the flags were of a black hue, and the church bells tolled for death: The King is dead! . . . Long live the King!

The old ruler closed his eyes after a long watch, and the reins of the two countries fell from his aged hands. In Vienna: an imperial funeral and imperial

Photo. Kosel, Vienna.

KING CHARLES.

(To face p. 36.)

mourning; in Buda: a coronation shining with the lustre of ancient gold. The clouds had broken! With his veiled, white-faced wife the young King passed like a vision through his royal town.

But it was all a dream. The King was in a hurry. In vain did his people proffer their devotion at the gate of his castle: he was incapable of grasping the moment, and departed before he had gathered this royal treasure. So the wind scattered the despised love of the nation. Something froze under the Hungarian sky, and in chilled soberness the morrow dawned.

In those times the winters were cold in Hungary. They froze one to the marrow as they had never done before. There was scarcely any fuel. Along the walls of the houses in Pest, children, girls, and old people thronged at the entrance to the coal merchants. They sat on the edge of the pavement, shivered and waited. At the horse-butchers, at the communal shops, in front of bakers', and dairymen's, long rows of sad women waited from dawn till late into the night. Quiet, patient women . . . waiting . . . Everybody was waiting—for life, for death, for news, for somebody to return. The hospitals were overcrowded, and all through the land, from one end to the other, the roads resounded with the wooden clatter of crutches.

That was the once happy Hungary! But hope and honour were still alive. Our war was a war of self-defence. Perhaps we, of all the combatants, had nothing to gain, had no ambition to take anything from any other country.

But our corrupt politics had lost a greater struggle than a battle. Personal hatred and envy brought about the downfall of Stephen Tisza, and the helm came into inexperienced hands. The power which had steered till then ceased to be, and while men of the Great Plain, Transylvania, Upper Hungary and West Hungary were away on the distant battle-fields, in honour bound, something happened in the crowded capital of the empty country.

Traces of the silent, clandestine work of undermining became gradually perceptible. But before its threads could be clearly defined they faded away and were absorbed by daily life. In the background, as on a stage, sinister shapes passed. From the sides invisible prompters whispered, and in the foreground there appeared a figure which day by day grew more distinct. This figure kept repeating, louder and louder, the secret promptings, as though they were his very own.

That man was Count Michael Károlyi.

. . . .

I shivered as I pondered these things. Then some noise outside interrupted my thoughts and I remembered the night's warning . . . Hours may have passed since I sat down at my writing-table. The light of my shaded lamp fell in a narrow wedge on to the sheet of paper in front of me, my head was still between my hands.

What was that? . . . Again the same noise. Then suddenly with relief I realized what it was. Near my window some mortar from the tiles had rolled from the roof into the gutter, quietly, like a shiver passing over the lonely house. I listened for some time, then I buried my face again in my hands and my thoughts wandered back by the path of recent events, picking up on the way fading memories which had been thrown to oblivion.

The picture of our great past was grand and full of dignity. Details stood out. Scenes gained colour. The expression of people's faces became clearer, and now and then one could look behind the veil of things. That which was far away had become history, whereas the present was warm, throbbing, human life.

How did it happen? And when? At the time train after train was rolling across Hungary, long military trains, carrying the troops from the freed Russian frontier towards the Italian and French fronts. The end of the war had never seemed nearer. The hope of victory carried all hearts with it. Even the prophets of evil portent became mute, and the possibility of an honest peace appeared like a mirage on the horizon. The frontiers of Hungary will not change: that was our only condition of peace—we have never wanted anything else. And then the road will be clear for the second thousand years.

But then, all of a sudden, a shining blade seemed to pierce the air. There was a flash of light, and the light lit up a new wound. What had happened. Who had caused it?

In the first days of January some people unknown had introduced revolutionary literature into the arsenals and munition factories. "Workers! . . . Brethren! . . . Soldier-brothers! . . . Not a penny, not a man for the army!" Those who had an opportunity of reading these pamphlets could have no doubt that they were produced by people who were opposed to Hungary's interests. What we imagined in horror had become a reality. A foe was in our midst and was attempting to achieve here what he had failed to accomplish on the other side of the front. Who are the guilty? The nation, fighting for life, clamoured indignantly for the mask to be torn off them. And when the mask was torn off they stood there in the light, with blinking eyes, caught in the act: a pseudo-scientific organisation of the Freemasons,* the International Freethinkers' branch of Hungarian Higher Schools, and the Circle of Galilee with its almost exclusively Jewish membership.

Others, who were equally implicated, withdrew suddenly into the obscurity of the background. As far as he was concerned, however, Michael Károlyi thought caution superfluous. He continued to remain in the foreground of the scene; and though doubtful strangers sneaked through the entrance of his palace, nobody interfered with him. Even the police left him alone, though it knew full well that when the revolutionary documents were drawn up he had been in close contact with the Galileist youths, and had even spent many hours in their office. He was observed from a neighbouring house. But invisible powers protected Michael Károlyi, and it was said that his confidential friends in official positions always informed him in time when his position was becoming dangerous.

Public opinion became nervous in those times, and waited with impatience for retribution. The headquarters of the Galilee Circle was sealed up by the police. Arrests were made. Then the names of some of the accused reached the public through the doors of the secret court—names with a striking sound. Even now I remember some of them: Helen Duczynska, Theodor Singer-Sugár, Herman Helfgott, Csillag-Stern, Kelen-Klein, Fried, Weiss, Sisa, Ignace Beller, and about three more Russian Jews, among them a prisoner of war called Solom, who possessed a multiplicator. There wasn't a single Hungarian among them. Obscure foreign hands had fumbled at our destiny! But nobody spoke of that. And yet the very names of the arrested Galileists were an indication of future events. Alas! the Hungarian nation has never known how to interpret the future by the warnings of the present.

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* It should be remembered that the Hungarian Freemasonry had become, like the Grand Orient de France, a political association and is fundamentally different from English Freemasonry. [TRANSLATOR.]

The trial of the Galileists came to an end: the court martial inflicted two remarkably lenient sentences and acquitted the rest. That was all. Then there followed silence, a silence similar to the one which in the autumn of 1917 hid Károlyi's journey to Switzerland and stifled the whispers that he had betrayed there to the French the German offensive which was preparing and had hobnobbed with Syndicalists and Bolshevists. Only when the sailors of Cattaro revolted was there another commotion. Notwithstanding the secrecy of the army command, rumours got about. The batman of a high officer brought a letter sewn in the lining of his coat.

Down there in the Gulf of Cattaro the fleet had mutinied. Michael Horthy, the hero of the Novarro, suppressed the rising and saved the fleet for the Monarchy. But in the embers of the extinguished fire the army command found curious footprints. It was alleged that two telegrams of the mutineers were intercepted. One was addressed to Trotski, the other to Michael Károlyi.

And again, nothing was done! Political consideration . . . Great names are involved . . . The King won't have it . . . The time is not propitious . . .

It was about this time that I reminded Count Stephen Tisza of a letter which I had received through Switzerland in the autumn of 1914, and which I had shown him at the time. The letter arrived approximately at the same time as Michael

Károlyi, whom mobilisation had found on French soil. According to this letter the French had good reasons for sending Károlyi home. *He was to be well rewarded if he did his work well . . . he might even become the President of the Hungarian Republic.* Stephen Tisza only shook his head: "You see phantoms. It would be a pity to make a martyr of him."

It was a long time ago. Much has become blurred since then, but I still feel the bitterness of that moment.

And all the other politicians thought as Tisza did. They did not take Michael Károlyi seriously, because they did not see those who were behind him. The attention of public opinion was absorbed by other things. Every day life became more difficult, and far away in Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations were going on. The delegates of the Russians dragged out the negotiations cunningly, and the German command, losing patience, rattled its sword at the council table. Meanwhile Bronstein-Trotski, the Foreign Commissioner of the Soviet, addressed inciting speeches over the heads of our delegates—to our soldiers, our workmen.

At home these speeches created a curious stir. As if they had been a signal the Jewish press of Hungary began to attack our German allies. The "dispersed" Circle of Galilee organised a demonstration in front of the German Consulate and broke its windows. The co-religionists of the Trotskis, Radeks and Joffes organised strikes by means of the trade union headquarters, which they had under their control. Thus did they support the interests of their Russian friends and weaken the position of our delegates.

During the strike Michael Károlyi, walking one day with his wife in the city, met one of their relations who lived in the suburbs and asked him anxiously, "Are the people rising out there?" The negative answer depressed them. "It does not matter . . . The day has not yet come . . . But we shall not escape revolution."

Louder and louder came the whispers out of the darkness: we had come to a phase when words could do the work. And words began to agitate: "Only a separate peace can save us from the revolution . . . We must leave the Germans to their fate . . . They are the cause of everything . . . The war goes on because of them . . . Alsace Lorraine . . ." Invisible lips uttered these things with persistent consistency. Unknown voices spoke to those who repeated their sayings. And far away from the fields of battle, in the country's capital, in the workshops and the barracks, quietly, secretly, the earth began to quake.

And yet the front was never stronger than at this period of the war. After the Ukrainian and Russian peace, these were perhaps the last moments which permitted us to hope for a possible peace, if only we showed unity and resolution. But in these fateful days some mischievous magic lantern flashed the picture of a weakening alliance with Germany, of internal discord and risings, towards our adversaries, and these pictures inspired them with new zeal. At home it became more and more clear that we harboured men who ate the bread of our soil under the protection of Hungarian soldiers, who drank the water of our wells and slept peacefully, whilst putting forth every possible effort to make us lose the war.

If I remember rightly it was at this time that Károlyi's political camp began to spread the rumour that he had come into touch with leaders of the Entente. Poincaré had once been the lawyer of the Károlyi family . . . Stories circulated. Others again knew that he had connections with Trotski and that he had organised secret military councils in the smaller towns round the capital.

"The traitor!"

While we in my family called him a traitor, the radical press raised him to the dignity of a prophet, and the misguided masses saw in him the saviour of the country.

The freemasons, socialists, feminists and galileists stood behind him. Some female members of his own family surrounded him like disciples and repeated without discrimination everything he proclaimed. That which would have brought a trooper to the gallows was freely said by Michael Károlyi the officer. In the clubs gentlemen shook hands with him, and society thought it original and amusing that he should have called his little daughter Bolshevik Eve. The haughty Count Károlyi, who would not have offered a seat to his bailiff and who during the war—well behind the front—refused to shake hands with infantry officers who came, covered with blood and mud, from the trenches, because "*ils n'etaient pas de famille*," now declaimed about democracy and equality, and made Bolshevism fashionable among his younger female relatives!

In this inner circle his influence reached such ridiculous proportions that a lady of his intimate acquaintance exclaimed in her democratic zeal: "Oh, I do love the rabble!" His wife's relations, following his teachings, poked fun at patriotism, raved about the Internationale, and wore some travesty of a dress because it had been dubbed "Bolshevik" fashion. Of course it was "only in play," but it was a dangerous game, for it covered those who wore Bolshevik fashions in earnest.

The young King was full of the best intentions. Perhaps he saw the danger, but he drew back when he ought to have excised the source of infection spread by Károlyi's friends. In Austria he granted an amnesty and released from prison the Czech traitors. The Austrian people, once so devoted to their Emperor, became indifferent . . . In Hungary he ordered judicial proceedings to be commenced against the traitors, but did not insist on their being carried out. Thus it happened that the Hungarian people, in an agony concerning the fate of their country, felt themselves forsaken and regarded their King with disappointment and bitter reproaches; while the dark forces, gathering encouragement from this eternal indecision, were emboldened to come out into the sunlight. Thus a bloodless war against Hungary was started in Hungary.

In the West the successful great German offensive shook for a time the camp of destruction. The successes of our allies were received by Károlyi with fear and trembling. His wife went into hysterics and his confidential newspaper editor, Baron Louis Hatvany, exclaimed sadly in my presence:

"No greater misfortune can befall us than a German victory. Russian Bolshevism is a thousand times preferable to German Militarism."

It was as if the earth had opened in front of me when I heard these words. I remember my reply:

"German militarism goes armed against armed men; Russian Bolshevism goes armed against unarmed people. That may please you better. As for me, I prefer militarism."

At this time the voice of the Hungarian Radical press was the same as that of Baron Hatvany. The same press which at the beginning of the war blackguarded our enemies shamefully, now wrote of them sentimentally. The same papers which, when the Russian invasion was threatening, cringed repulsively before the German power, now kicked the wounded giant fearlessly.

For Germany was stricken now. The offensive came to a standstill. Contradictory reports spread. And while our enemies prepared with burning patriotism for the sublime effort, underhand peace talk was heard in Hungary, and Károlyi—through his friends—acclaimed pacifism and internationalism. The Radical press was triumphant. Not content with attacking the alliance it attacked that which was Hungarian as well. Nothing was sacred. It threw mud at Tisza's clean name. It derided all that was precious to the nation. Base calumnies were spread about the Queen.

The overthrow of authority and of traditions are the necessary preliminaries to the destruction of a nation.

With such evil omens came the fifth summer of war, which brought the fifth bad harvest. In the West, the German front retreated unresistingly. In the East, the storm of the Russian Revolution was blowing over the Carpathians. Our fronts were infected with Károlyi's agitators. Those who were caught paid the penalty. Yet there were enough well-paid poisoners of wells who slipped through. Their work was easy: the West provided gold, the East the example. The infection spread . . .

The collapse of Germany's power, the many old sins of the Austrian higher command, the catastrophe that befell our army at the Piave, the bitterness for the disproportionate blood sacrifice of the Hungarians, the anti-Hungarian spirit of the Austrian military element, the endless squabbles of our politicians, the blindness of our impotent government—all these served those who, to Hungary's misfortune, aspired to power.

Bad news came fast. In Arad, in Nagyvárad, some detachments mutinied and refused obedience. Revolutionary papers were found in the barracks. In Budapest the working masses became threateningly restless; near the communal food-shops and other stores the waiting crowd was no longer patient and silent. I stopped often at the edge of the pavement and listened to what they said. The shabby, waiting rows of tired people struggled for hours between two wedges. In the shop the profiteers sucked their life blood; in the street paid agitators incited them cunningly, clandestinely against "the gentle-folk." "It all depends on us how long we stand it. After all we are the majority, not they."

The crowd approved and failed to notice that the Semitic race was only to be found at the two ends of the queue, and that not a single representative of it could be seen as a buyer among the crowding, the poor, and the starving . . . This was symbolical, a condensed picture of Budapest. The sellers, the agitators, were Jews. The buyers and the misguided were the people of the capital.

A carriage passed in the middle of the road. A pale, sickly woman sat in it. The waiting row of people growled angrily towards the carriage: Cannot this one walk like everybody else? Unpleasant words were spoken. I looked along the line. The agitators were there no more. But the seed they had sown grew suddenly ripe. The people talked excitedly to each other and shouted provocatively at those who wore a decent coat. "Why should he have that coat? All that will have to change!" Envy and hatred distorted the face of the street. A part of the press was already inciting openly to class-hatred.

The town was now on the eve of its suicide, and presently, like a thunderbolt, there fell into the streets the news that the Bulgarian army had laid down its arms!

I well remember that awful day. It was the twenty-sixth of September. Through the agitated, humming town I was going to the funeral of my little godson. The streets were thronged with people. As they went along they were all reading newspapers, and I noticed that they seemed to stagger as if they had been stunned by some terrific blow. Harassed faces rushed past me, and only here and there was some contrast perceptible. I did not understand it until later . . .

Two Jews were talking to each other:

"At last! *Beneidenswertes Volk*, these Bulgarians. They will get good conditions! *Prima Bedingungen!* And that is the beginning of peace."

They alone seemed to be happy . . . And the sun glittered on the roof-tops and there was something in the glowing brightness of the early autumn which reminded me of the waking life of spring, when I had walked in the same neighbourhood. When was it? I remembered with a pang. On the morn of the victory of Gorlice did the sun shine thus, above the bright-coloured waving flags. And through my tears I saw suddenly the little dead golden-headed boy, the hope of his house: little Andrew Tormay . . . He came during the war, he smiled, and he was gone. His short life ended with the last world-moving act. But was it the last? Or was it a new beginning?

. . . .

A cold shudder ran down my back. Merciful God, is it not enough? Somewhere a cock crowed and roused me from my meditations. I took my hands from my face and rose stiff from beside my table. The room had become chilled during the long night. Between the slats of the blind something was painting with a delicate brush rapid, cold blue lines on the darkness. Dawn. I looked out for an instant into the damp, sad half-light and tried to picture the morn. But the thoughts of the night crowded upon me.

Some time must have elapsed before I noticed that I was sitting on the edge of my bed, rigid, dressed. A jumble of thoughts thronged my brain . . . Since the Bulgarian armistice life had been one continuous series of shocks, and I remembered events only with gaps. Big pieces were missing, then they started again . . . Wilson! In those dark hours this name still soothed our harassed souls. Disastrous illusion, enticing nations into a death-trap! Peace . . . peace! howled the voice of this phantom behind the battlefields, attacking the still resisting armies in the back. Peace! . . . Peace! it howled along the fronts. Then in an aside it added: "There is no peace for you till you discard your Emperor!" Meanwhile, in our midst, the camp of Count Michael Károlyi studied cynically, as if it were a game, the guidebook of the Russian Revolution. Tisza and Andrássy became reconciled. Too late, too late . . .

Then came a memorable day. Parliament sat on the 17th of October and the Prime Minister announced the severance of all community with Austria, except the personal union of the Sovereign. Too late, too late . . . The aspiration of centuries, the hope of generations, became a puppet. The unity of the Empire, dualism, the common army, were feverishly thrown overboard from the Monarchy's drifting airship. The opposition laughed. One deputy promised a revolution for March and turning toward Tisza spoke of the gallows.

"The parody of a revolution," answered Tisza contemptuously.

Károlyi rose to speak. The storm broke, and one of his hangers-on, Lovászy, shouted at the House: "We are friends of the Entente!"

This was the first open avowal of the treason which had been committed for years by Károlyi's party; the horror of it ran like a shudder through the House, the city and the land, to pass on as a slavering mendicant to our enemies. Those who were honest among us hurled the treason back at the traitors, that it might brand the foreheads of those who in the hour of our agony could offer their friendship to our destroyers. How could the powers of the Entente feel anything but contempt and disdain for such an offer! Their generals and politicians might make use of traitors, but certainly they would not demean themselves by accepting their friendship.

After this disgraceful sitting, in front of the very gate of the House of Parliament, an attempt was made on Count Stephen Tisza's life. Years before a deputy called Kovács-Strasser, and now a certain Lékai-Leiter, raised the weapon against him.

On October the 22nd Tisza spoke for the last time in the Commons and declared that we must stand by our allies. If we had to fall, let us fall together, honourably. And then his voice, which never deceived and never lied, told the unfortunate nation that: "We have lost this war!" . . . Amidst breathless silence the sinister words rang through the country and, like Death's scythe, cut down all hope.

"Tisza said so . . ."

There was no more. And henceforth every new event was but another mortal wound. Wilson sent a reply to the Monarchy which implored him for peace. He would have no intercourse with us, and referred us to the Czechs, the Roumanians and the Serbs. They wanted to humiliate us, and humiliate us they did. But we still had an army, and we clung to the idea: the Hungarian troops would come back from the front.

Before we could recover our breath there came another stroke. On the 23rd of October a deputy of the Károlyi party shouted into the sitting House of Commons that when the King had entered Debreczen the Austrian National Anthem had been played. Nobody asked if the news were true. The song of Austria's Emperors in the very heart of the Great Hungarian Plain! Always, even now? Have they not yet learned, will they never forget? . . . Then Károlyi read aloud a telegram which turned out later to be a forgery: the Croatian regiment in Fiume had mutinied!—Thus the opposition possessed itself of two weapons. The reporters in the press gallery jumped up at once and loudly supported Károlyi's camp. The impossible happened: in the Hungarian Parliament the Radical newspaper men of the press gallery brought about the fall of the government! Tisza looked angrily towards the gallery and made signs to the speaker. What had become of his authority, the imposing of which had nearly cost him his life?

The storm passed by, and after this the ground gave way quickly under the Hungarian Parliament.

Wekerle resigned. All parties negotiated a coalition.

Meanwhile the King sat in council at Gödöllö, and it was about this time that the shifty rabble which gathered in the night of the 22nd of October at Károlyi's palace and dubbed itself the National Council emerged from darkness. The storm-troops of destruction, the Galileist Circle, came again to the fore; headed by a flag which Károlyi had given them they paraded the town and penetrated into the Royal Castle. The flag-bearer, a medical student of Galician origin called Rappaport, stuck the flag out of one of the castle's windows and addressed the rabble in the court yard. He blackguarded the King and called for cheers for Károlyi and the Republic.

Nobody attached any great importance to all this, and the town remained indifferent: the incident was practically unknown beyond the streets where the Galileists' strange, noisy procession had passed. Through the gate of Károlyi's palace furtive people hurried in and out. Some said that officers and men escaped from the front were hiding in the palace, others whispered of secret meetings in the Count's rooms.

What was going on there? Nobody troubled about it, and the newspapers wrote long articles about the Spanish "flu." The epidemic was serious, people met their friends at funerals, but the newspapers exaggerated intentionally; they published alarming statistics and reported that the undertakers could not cope with the situation: people had to be buried by torchlight at night. The panic-stricken crowd could scarcely think of anything else. The terror of the epidemic was everywhere, and the greater terror which threatened, the brewing revolution, was hidden by it. The press, as if working to order, hypnotised the public with the ghost of the epidemic while it belittled the misfortunes of the unfortunate nation and rocked its anxiety to sleep by raising foolish, false hopes of a good peace, and gushed over Károlyi's connections with the Entente.

And so the big, unwieldy mass of citizens slid towards the precipice in its sleep.

There came an awful day. We learned that as the result of the insidious propaganda of Károlyi's agents and his press, a Hungarian division and a Viennese regiment had laid down their arms . . . It was through this break that the forces of the Entente had crossed the Piave. Our forces repelled them in a supreme effort. Then the English tanks came into play. These were too much for the nerves of our men, whose discipline had been slackened by several months' intrigue. They mutinied, and it was reported that in the confusion General Wurm was killed by his own men.

In Budapest the papers which appeared were blanked heavily by the exertions of the censor, but in the streets people already spoke openly of the National Council and proclaimed loudly that one could take the oath of allegiance to it at the rooms of Károlyi's party. There was an astonishing number of soldiers in the crowd. I noticed then for the first time how many sailors walked the streets. Where did these come from?

Next day was Sunday, October the 27th. I recollect clearly that I did not leave the house. Within the last few days most of the inhabitants of the villas in our neighbourhood had moved in haste in to the town. It was quiet, and I pruned the shrubs in our garden.

It was only through the newspapers that I learned what had happened. Advised by Károlyi, the King had received at Gödöllö the day before the Radical journalist Oscar Jászi and the two organisers of his party, Zsigmond Kúnfi and Ernest Garami, both Socialist journalists. Károlyi's press was shouting victory, and having obtained all it wanted, it began to see red and started to defame the King. Poor young King! The reception was a sad and useless concession. These men were revolutionaries and poisoners whose due was not an audience but a warrant of arrest. Even now everything could have been saved, all that was wanted was a fist that dared to strike. But the King's beautiful hands, according to Jászi's report of the audience, only toyed nervously with his rings . . . Their Majesties went in the evening to Vienna. They left their children in the royal castle and took Károlyi with them in the royal train.

The morning papers spoke of "Károlyi, the Prime

Károlyi Böhm Pogány

COUNT MICHAEL KÁROLYI AND HIS ENTOURAGE.

(To face p. 50.)

Minister designate of Hungary." There was to be a monster meeting in town in front of the House of Parliament. The workmen appeared in full force. Lovászy, Count Batthyany, and " comrades " Garbai and Pogány made revolutionary speeches. A group of workmen, to show their approval of these measures, carried a gallows on which a doll dressed like Tisza in red hussar breeches was suspended. In the evening the crowd went to the railway station to receive Károlyi on his return from Vienna.

Later in the day my brother Géza telephoned to me from Baden (near Vienna) ; he had just come from General Headquarters. Archduke Joseph and Michael Károlyi had come in the same train. The King had recalled the Archduke from the Italian front and sent him as *homo regius* to Budapest. The Archduke obeyed, though he would have preferred to return first to his troops and come back at their head to restore order in the capital. The King, however, vetoed this plan. Two unfortunate blunders. The Archduke arrived without backing, and Count Károlyi infinitely offended in his vanity. The youths of the Galilee Circle were waiting for the latter at the railway station, and he shook his long yellow hands in the air and shouted : "I will not forsake Hungary's independence."

Meanwhile worse and worse news reached us. We reeled under it, stunned. Our inertia was folly. Everybody expected somebody else to do something, and in the dark hours of our mad misfortune Károlyi's National Council alone became bolder.

Then came the events of October 28th. A crowd which had gathered near the rooms of Károlyi's party, incited by the revolutionary speeches of two factious orators, and led by Stephen Friedrich, a manufacturer, started towards the Danube to cross over to the Royal Castle and claim from Archduke Joseph the Premiership for Károlyi. "He alone can get us a good peace ! . . ." There was a crush at the bridge-head. The crowd used the police roughly. Shots were fired. The police replied with a volley. A few people fell dead on the pavement. That was exactly what the organisers wanted. They shrieked wildly : "These martyrs will make the revolution . . ."

How many days ago did all this happen? I began to count. One, two, three, four days in all. It seemed as though it had been much longer ago. Four days! . . . What a gap between then and this day when Tisza lay dead and with him much of Hungary's honour!

. . . .

The torture of these memories drove me into despair. An utter weariness possessed me. I fell back on my bed. I wanted to rest, but against my will impressions came crowding into my brain . . . October 29th . . . What happened on that day? Detached images passed before me. Fields soaked with wet . . . A little, whitewashed cottage on the edge of a wood, a tangled little garden, with ivy creeping over the paths and covering the old trees. For years I have gathered my evergreens there for the Day of the Dead. This year the little house has a new inmate. The old people have gone and the new proprietor appeared frightened when I shook the gate for admittance. Even after he had admitted me he looked at me several times suspiciously. His name was Stern, or something of the sort. While selling the ivy he spoke nervously:

"This neighbourhood has become very insecure. Many deserters roam the woods. They spend the night in the empty villas." Then he asked me what I wanted the ivy for. "The cemeteries will be closed this year on the Day of the Dead. They are afraid of the crowds, because of the epidemic, and then . . . who knows what may happen if the King is obstinate and won't make Károlyi Prime Minister."

"I hope he never will . . ."

The man looked at me angrily:

"He must come, and so must the Socialists. They will save Hungary."

"It is odd that you should expect the salvation of the country to come from those who denounce patriotism."

"I see things differently," said the man. "That is just the trouble in Hungary. They always talk of the country, the nation. There is no such thing as a country and a nation. It is the same to me where I live, in Moscow, in Münich or in Belgrade.

It is all the same to me as long as I live well. That is the thing we have to drive at, and it is only through socialism that it can be attained."

"The ultimate end being communism?"

"Later, sometime, some day, yes," the man answered in a low voice.

"And the Russian example? Do you think that what is going on there is the realisation of human happiness?"

"That is only the stage of transition."

"Transition which may mean annihilation."

Rain began to fall. It drifted in dense silver threads between the hills. The cottage, its inhabitant and its garden disappeared from my memory. I saw another picture. It was evening. My mother was sitting silently in the hall, lit up by the shaded lamp, and, as she was wont to do every year, she was winding the ivy wreath for my father's grave.

"It is better for him not to have lived to see this," she said abruptly, quite unexpectedly.

I looked at her. It was as if her words had opened a gap through which I could get a glimpse of her soul. I now knew that, though she never said so, she was worried by premonitions.

Later on my brothers and sisters came. They brought news. "It is said that Archduke Joseph would be made Viceroy. The King has charged Count Hadik to form a Cabinet. Károlyi's agitators are making speeches in the streets all over the town. There are great demonstrations. The printers' compositors have gone over to the National Council. Now the compositors censor the papers themselves. Nothing is allowed to be printed without the approval of the secretariat of the Socialist party. The workmen of the arsenal have broken open the armouries. The police have joined Károlyi's National Council . . . Down there at the Piave everything has collapsed. There is mutiny in the fleet at Pola. In the plains of Venezia the front has gone to pieces."

And all the while, my silent mother was making her wreath . . .

I remembered nothing more. The hours passed unnoticed. Where was I next day? What did I hear? Memory was effaced. That day was the eve of the 31st of October . . . Ah yes! In the afternoon we had a visitor. Countess Rafael Zichy came from the Castle Hill though the town had ceased to be safe. Yet she came and stayed late. The lamps on the roads had not been lit and we had to light her down the misty dark hill with a lantern. I was anxious to know if she reached home safely. My mother telephoned . . . So much I remembered, but I have no recollection of what we talked about while she was here.

. . . .

Dead tired, I closed my eyes. But the swift changing pictures passed in restless fantasy . . . Human figures chasing outlines . . . bloodmarks . . . and the dead, white face of Stephen Tisza . . .

Shuddering, I opened my eyes. The night was over and day had come. And then I remembered that the Russians had not come after all. We had escaped that danger, but the rest was still there, encircling us and holding us in captivity.

A slight noise attracted me. It came from the lamp hanging from the ceiling. A moth had got into the glass chimney and with tattered wings was struggling vainly to escape.

CHAPTER IV

November 2nd.

The house stood amid a sad, grey morning. Through the fog a continuous drizzle was heard in the woods, and along the road a muddy stream gurgled in the broken gutter. The people in the electric trams going townwards were just like the morning itself: grey, wet and sad. They spoke of the mutiny in the Russian camp.

"They have been disarmed" . . . "Not at all, they have spread over the country . . ." "They pillage in small bands, like the escaped convicts. They too broke out on the news of the revolution. They captured a train and came, all armed, towards Pest. On the way they fought a regular battle, with many dead and wounded; the rest escaped." . . "No, they did not. They enlisted as sailors."

There was panic and confusion in all this talk, and nobody seemed to know anything for certain.

The tram turned round the foot of the hill. At the stopping place I bought a newspaper. The papers were filthy, and the woman who sold them did not take much heed of me ; she was talking politics with a hawker who sold boot-laces and moustache wax at that spot.

"Give me the *Budapesti Hirlap.*"—But the paper which for the last ten years had fought, practically single-handed, against the machinations of the destructive press was not to be had. The woman thrust another paper into my hand. The tram went on and I began to read. As if announcing a glorious victory the head-lines proclaimed in immense type: "ON THE WHOLE FRONT WE HAVE LAID DOWN OUR ARMS! IN CASE OF OCCUPATION WE HAVE ASKED FOR FRENCH OR BRITISH TROOPS." Something stabbed and tore my heart: Gorlice, Limanova, Lovchen, Doberdo . . .

The newspaper continued: "Six weeks are needed for the conclusion of peace . . . The King has relieved the new government from its allegiance . . . The government has decided in principle for a Republic and has extended its programme by this condition . . . The Government has sworn allegiance to the National Council at the Town Hall . . . the touching scene, which buried a past of a thousand years, passed amidst indescribable enthusiasm."

Our arms laid down! Foreign occupation! The King has relieved the perjurers! A republic in Hungary! And one of the most important papers in Hungary writes of all this as if it were the accomplishment of long cherished hopes, as if it rejoiced that "the past of a thousand years" had been buried! Not a word of sympathy, of consolation.

Then something suddenly dawned on me: in this paper a victorious race was exulting over the fall of a defeated nation! And the defeated, the insulted nation was my own! . . . So they hated us as much as all that, they, who lived among us as if they were part of us. Why? What have we done to them? They were free, they were powerful, they fared better with us than in any other country. And yet they rejoiced that we should disappear in dishonour, in shame, in defeat.

I threw the newspaper away—It was an enemy.

We came to the Pest end of the bridge. The tram stopped, and I wanted to change. "The trams are not running. You can walk," growled the inspector. The walls are covered with posters, orders, announcements, proclamations. On a big coloured poster: "Lukasich has been appointed executioner." And under the announcement the execution of a soldier was depicted. As I walked along my eyes gleaned a sentence from another poster: "People of Hungary, soldiers, workers and citizens!" (The order of the words was significant; but it did not appear to strike people's imagination). "Fellow-citizens!

Glory, honour and homage to the victorious people of Budapest. The people's revolution has conquered " . . . and the signature: " The First Hungarian Popular Government." Then another sentence: " The military and civil power is in the hands of the head of the Hungarian Popular Government, Michael Károlyi." Many words, many black words. I read the last words of the Popular Government's Proclamation: "To assure the transition from the present conditions to a quiet peaceful life, we organise Soldiers' Councils and a National Guard so that ETERNAL PEACE may gain its healing sway over us all."

Red and white blotches of paper and alternate signatures: Heltai, Commander of the Garrison, Linder, Commander-in-Chief.

Linder? I never heard this name during the war. And yet it seemed familiar to me. Then I remembered. I met him at a social gathering, and once at an afternoon tea. On both occasions he seemed under the influence of drink. That was the reason I noticed him, otherwise his insignificance would have wiped him out of my memory. Now I seemed to see his face. He gave me the impression of an elderly stage swashbuckler. His well-groomed hair was grey, his shoulders high, his neck thick-set, his face congested; his tiny grey eyes winked all the time, and when he laughed they disappeared entirely. Linder . . . Can this stage swashbuckler be the new Minister of War?

I now noticed that more and more people hurried past me, and that all were going towards the House of Parliament. A crowd was gathering in the big, beflagged square. People dressed in black, officers in field uniform, poured from the neighbouring streets. Some mounted police arrived. Then came a military band. A military cordon was formed in the centre.

" What is happening here?" I asked a woman who stood aimlessly among the loafers on the kerb.

" I don't know." A young man, who might have been in her company, answered for her: " The officers of the Garrison are swearing allegiance to the National Council."

" There are crowds of them," said the woman, and moved her neck like a duck in a pond. The young man laughed with contempt. "There may be four hundred." His accent seemed to proclaim him from Transylvania.

Motor cars rushed past me. Overhead, aeroplanes were circling and strewing leaflets among the crowd: "The glorious revolution! The people have conquered!" Leaflets on the ground, leaflets in the gutter, leaflets everywhere.

The great grey mass of the House of Parliament hid the Danube from our sight like a petrified lace curtain. On its walls the ancient coats of arms of various counties, the monuments of past Kings, appeared and disappeared in the mist like a dissolving view. At the sides of the building the square extended to the river, and the ghostly outlines of a bronze figure on horseback stood out against the background of mist-covered Buda: the statue of Andrássy, the great Minister of Foreign Affairs. In the haze it seemed that the rider moved, as though he wanted to turn his steed and ride away to the sound of brazen horse-shoes, back along the banks of the Danube, to see if the river had changed its course—the river which had imposed upon the lands between the Black Forest and the Black Sea the alliance which he had written on paper. Had it left its bed, had it dried up, that great Danube, the ancient zone across Europe's body, that some man should be so bold as to tear up the scrap of paper which confirmed the bond? Mist rose over the yellow waves. The poisoned town threw its image across a veil into the river and poisoned its waters. And the stream carried the poison, and perhaps by to-morrow the lands it crosses may already writhe with internal pains.

To-morrow . . . Everything is lost in a mist. Round the square the houses showed their many-eyed faces through a haze. Below, the rain-covered asphalt pavement shone, reflecting the people who stood upon it. In the windows of the houses, on the stone steps of the House of Parliament, between two stone lions, more people. I looked at my watch. It was eleven o'clock. Another motor car dashed up, there was some cheering in the centre of the square, and the figure of a man rose above the crowd. He stood on the steps of the House of

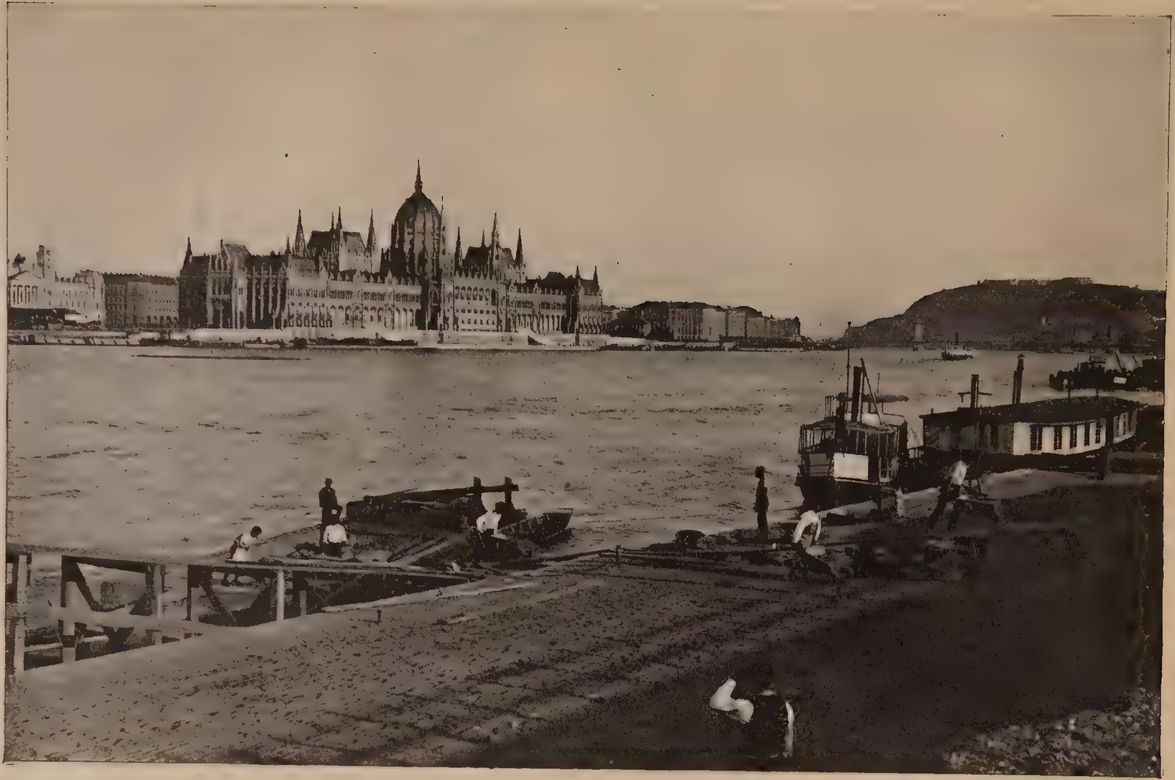

Photo. Erdelyi, Budapest.

THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT.

(To face p. 58.)

Parliament in a dark overcoat, a bowler-hat on his head, a glaring red tie round his neck.

The Minister of War. He began to wave his hat over his head as if attempting to catch an elusive butterfly. I caught a few of his words. He spoke with a lisp and stuttered slightly. "Soldiers, I expect discipline . . . We have faithfully done our duty on the field of battle . . . We suffered and we fought . . . We imagined that the ideals we fought for were worth while . . . I, your responsible Minister of War, declare that these ideals were false!"

I thought he would be knocked down for saying that. Four hundred officers. Just enough . . .

"There is a new order of things," . . . shouted Linder. The short woman next to me jerked her neck and complained: "I can't hear anything." The slim young man, in his thin shabby overcoat, stretched his neck to listen: "He says that we have not been beaten. We have won, the sovereign people has won. We have conquered that false system . . ."

"I can't understand," said the woman excitedly.

We could hear Linder's voice: "When we had beaten the Russians and there was no more question of national defence, we had to go on fighting for imperialistic, militaristic, egotistic ends . . ."

"Aha," said the woman, and was bored.

The voice in the middle of the square continued to shout: "But perhaps we ought not to grumble that this war has lasted so long. We had to demolish the tyranny of a thousand years, the tradition of a thousand years, the servitude of a thousand years."

He, too, gloats over the destruction of a thousand years. What is the matter with this town?

Some straggling cheers resounded and a few caps were raised. Then the square became mute, for the hat of the Minister of War began to wave again in the air. His face became purple with the effort, and his voice sounded shrill. Words came, and he said:

"I never want to see a soldier again!"

For a moment these words passed above my comprehension. Then they came back and drummed in my brain. I could not believe my ears. I must have misunderstood him. It seemed impossible that a sane person should have said such a thing. The

Minister of War of the government which had broken up the front under the pretence that Hungary was in need of Hungarian troops for the defence of Hungarian frontiers! No, it was more than ever impossible now when the Serbians were marching towards us and Wilson's message had delivered us up to the rapacity of Czech, Roumanian and Yugo-Slav ambitions. Only the voice of dementia or sublime criminality could speak such words. What made him say it? But he is drunk. Is it not visible on his face? Do not people see how he sways and grins? His tongue has slipped, he is going to withdraw his words. No harm has been done as yet. The people have not grasped his horrible meaning, his venomous words can be snatched back from the air.

Near Linder a long sallow face began to nod. Károlyi stood on the steps. At his shoulder appeared a puffy, olive coloured face: Oscar Jászi, Károlyi's prompter. So there they are too, listening to all this, and Károlyi nods and Jászi smiles, confirming, ratifying the awful words.

But the officers of the garrison are there! There may be about four hundred, perhaps more, all soldiers, all armed, all men. They will not stand it, they will rush at the Minister of War, catch hold of him by his red tie and string him up to the nearest lamp post like a depraved beast. My heart was hammering, and for a moment I had to turn away. It would not be a pleasant sight, and after this who will keep the army in hand? Who will take up the arms that are to be thrown away? He proclaims anarchy! He does not want to see any soldiers . . . And within the cordon cheers are raised!

"Take the oath!" shouted Linder. Even then I had hope. Surely something must happen. The men will suddenly regain consciousness. In 1848 the Imperial High Commissioner Lambert was stabbed to death by the crowd on the floating bridge, though what was that foreigner's guilt compared with the guilt of these Hungarians? Surely they cannot remain quiet like this? They are going to tear him to pieces. A hundred naked fists—why perhaps a single one could do it . . . Oh for that ONE, gracious God!

"KÁROLYI STOOD ON THE STEPS."

Within the military cordon the officers of the garrison stood in a row, stood there and took the oath. The soldiers of the King swore obedience to Michael Károlyi's National Council.

A burning sense of shame rose within me. And then, suddenly, something seemed to open my eyes, and I saw beyond men and events. Those officers in the square could not be, all of them, deserters and hired traitors. Surely there were some among them who had taken an honourable share in the tragic Hungarian glory of the war, who had suffered just as I had. They were soldiers, and as if it were a dishonour to be so, that fellow dared to tell them to their face that he did not want to see soldiers any more. And these words will run all over the town, and to-morrow they will be racing across the country and will reach the frontiers where they will lie in wait for the armed millions returning form the front.

Some vile spell, the dazzle of some occult charm, held the crowd fascinated and cowed all into a lethargy of terror. What power could it be? Whence did it come? What was its end? For neither Károlyi, nor Linder, nor Oscar Jászi possessed that demoniacal influence which crushes will power and opposition, makes cowards of brave souls and drags honour in the dust. This force did not rise to-day or yesterday; it is the result of thousands of years of savage hatred and bestial will for power, a monster begotten in obscurity, which, safe from attack, has spread across the globe, waiting its opportunity, setting its snares with cunning, watching for the hour when it can strangle its victim as with a rope.

And now it will strangle us too! Our time has come!

I shuddered in my helpless solitude amidst the crowd that blackened the square, where men suffered everything, cheered the negation of their existence, and pledged themselves to their own destruction.

The sound of trumpets rose. The military band struck up a tune. What was it? . . . My heart nearly stopped beating when I realised what it was. The great revolutionary song of a strange people rose above the square, the national anthem of a nation which had been our enemy during the war, which led on the revengeful victors who were preparing to trample us beneath their feet. A hymn of rebellion, which they play in the beflagged towns on the banks of the Seine and the Marne to proclaim their victory, a tune which means glory to them, humiliation to us. If the French nation had succumbed to German arms, would they play this day *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* on the Place de la Concorde ?

To what depth have you sunk, Hungarian men? I set my teeth and pressed my suffering down into my heart. And the grandiose strains of the Marseillaise floated over my head. Their beauty I heard not. To me the notes were but the guffaws of a scornful melody that roared derision over the square. The clarions sounded brazen yells of contempt, the rolling of the drums emphasised their mockery, and the cymbals applauded—applauded our defeat . . . And the crowd cheered Károlyi.

The soldiers went back to the City. The interrupted traffic thronged over the shining asphalt. Carriages drove by. Small groups vanished in the distant streets. Slowly the square became empty. A few constables remained on duty in front of the House of Parliament; people waited at the stopping place of the tram. The woman with the duck's neck and the Transylvanian youth were there too. We waited.

The House of Parliament relapsed into its grave silence. The bronze figure of the horseman near the shore was invisible. Had it gone, was it still there? I hesitated. There, on the other side, towards the bridge, near the river, the embankment was bare. There never had been a statue there. But the wraith of a giant whose blood was spilt on October 31st is slowly groping his way towards it. His chest is pierced by a bullet, his heart's blood has flowed away. He goes slowly, but he will get there—when the day comes.

The Transylvanian young man and the woman near me were both staring at the shore. I had no intention of speaking aloud yet I said:

"That is where Stephen Tisza's monument is going to stand."

The woman was horribly frightened. "Please,

SOLDIERS TAKING THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO KAROLYI'S NATIONAL COUNCIL.

don't say things like that. The people hate him frightfully."

"But why should they hate him so?"

"He was the cause of the war; the soldier who killed him said so."

"His monument is going to stand there."

"You will be knocked down if you say such things," said the young man. "This morning a gentleman just said to his wife: "Poor Tisza!" Nevertheless the passengers became indignant, insulted him, stopped the car and shouted till both got off. You must say nothing openly about him, except that he was a scoundrel, that he wanted the war and was the cause of all the bloodshed. One may not say anything of anybody but what the National Council says. One must say nothing of Károlyi but that he is the only person who can save Hungary. This is our liberty."

Later in the day I had news of another misfortune which had befallen us while the drunken Minister of War was proclaiming in front of the House of Parliament that he never wanted to see a soldier again. Archduke Joseph and his son Joseph Francis have sworn fidelity to the National Council at the Town Hall. Somebody who had seen the Archdukes told me that they had gone to the ceremony in field-uniform, with all their orders on their chests. John Hock had the doors of the hall opened so that the public might follow the ceremony and then received in the name of the Council the oaths which bestowed a certain prestige and a doubtful legal standing on the power they have built up on mud.

Károlyi's press shrieked with joy. The mid-day papers published the report and obsequiously fawned on the Archdukes. Cunningly they called this brave, clean soldier the new Philippe Egalité, comparing him to the Orléans Prince who had denied his origin and pronounced death on his king . . . I was dumfounded. Those who had any strength of character would feel now that they had been abandoned, while the weak would have nothing to cling to and would inevitably drift toward the National Council. What was at the bottom of it all? How did it happen that Archduke Joseph, the general idolized by the nation, the bearer of the great traditions of the great Palatines, how did he come to the disgraceful table where a disreputable priest collected oaths for the National Council? What has forced the Archduke to join the enemies of his country and his dynasty? Among the many dark scenes of this grim tragedy this one alone has come to light; it cannot yet be understood, and the time has not yet come to pass judgment upon it. That the Archduke went there with a stricken soul, against his innate convictions, those who know him cannot doubt.

Ever since his childhood, ever since he started life under the old trees of Alcsuth, he had always trod the paths of the nation's honour. During the war he was a father to the Hungarian soldiers. Of the many stories told about him I will repeat only one which I had from my brother. At the Italian front a wounded Hungarian soldier was asked on his deathbed if he had any wish. "I should like to see Archduke Joseph once more." That was all he said and the Archduke came and held his hand while he died. One who was loved like that was not carried by fear or bribe to the Town Hall. It was not for his own sake but in the misconceived interest of his country that he made the sacrifice, aggrandised by its background, his family's transcendent history of a thousand years.

In front of him in a dirty office: Michael Károlyi, John Hock, Kunfi, Jászi. Behind him, on a road lost in the centuries, in silver armour with vizor raised: the haughty face of the Emperor Rudolph, Count of Hapsburg, whose cup-bearer was a Hohenzollern. And again, his handsome silver locks covered with a black velvet biretta, the chain of the Golden Fleece about his neck: Maximilian, the friend of poets, the hero of Theuerdank, the last of the knights. In a heavily embroidered bodice, the sparkling Marguerite of Austria, ruling Duchess of the Netherlands. Philippe le Bel, and the amorous Joan. In grave splendour, Charles V., on whose kingdom the sun never set, and the victor of Lepanto's gory waters, the young Don Juan of Austria. The gloomy cortège of the Spanish Philips and Carlos. The full-wigged Ferdinand and Leopold under the holy crown, and Maria Thérèse's powdered little head bowed in the grandiose tumult of Hungarian fidelity, among drawn swords and hands uplifted for the vow: "*Vitam et sanguinem pro rege nostro . . .*" Joseph, the king in a hat,* a narrow, meditative face at the window of the Vienna Burg, while behind him Mozart's spinet sounds delicately sweetly from the gilt white room. A touching face: Marie Antoinette, more royal on the scaffold than on the throne. Leopold of Toscana, the friend of the Hungarians. In a simple white frock-coat: the Duke of Reichstadt. In the robes of the Order of St. Stephen: the great Palatines. And at the end of the row the constitutional old King, the last grand seigneur of Europe, and Elizabeth, the wandering queen, who never was at home but when she was in Hungary.

This history of the Hapsburgs is the history of Europe itself. It is a history of imperial diadems and royal crowns, of empires, kingdoms and countries, of centuries and generations. And so to drag the Archduke Joseph into the mire was precisely what Károlyi and his accomplices desired. Let the downfall be complete, so that there shall be nothing to look back on, so that the abased nation shall not be able to expect anything from anybody. The political leader of the nation has been killed in the person of Stephen Tisza; its military leader has now been enticed into the gutter and has been covered with mud so that those who look out for a chief round whom to rally may not discern his real character. The bonds have been severed, and in the silence of our amazement we are all become solitary and forlorn.

What is left to us? The funeral of Stephen Tisza! The dead leader will once more gather his followers together. And then our bitterness shall find voice and strength.

. . . .

It was in the afternoon that I heard that the funeral which we had wanted to attend had already taken place quietly, in other words secretly. Only a new act of Károlyi's impudence made some noise.

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* Joseph II. would never consent to be crowned.

He had sent a wreath labelled: " A human atonement to my greatest political adversary. Michael Károlyi." The mourning family, however, had the wreath thrown on the garbage heap. Quietly, with secrecy, Tisza's coffin was taken from the house of the bloody deed to the railway station. Few of his friends were present, but the two women who had been faithful to the last were there. They took him to Geszt. Once more he was to cross the great plain he loved so much, to take his rest in the soil of the land that had allowed him no rest while he lived.

Evening came. A cart rolled through the silence of our rural retreat and stopped in front of our garden. We had been waiting for weeks for the long paid-for firewood, and at last it had come. The Swabian driver who had brought it stood lazily on top of the pile and threw one log after the other indifferently into the road. I asked him if he would mind bringing the wood into the courtyard. If it remained out there every piece of it would be stolen before the morrow.

"Certainly not; you ought to be jolly glad that I brought it at all," he answered. He squeezed the money for cartage into the pocket of his breeches, whipped up his horses, and the cart rolled downward on the mountain road. I did not know what to do. I went to the farm, then enquired at the nearest houses, when I noticed two men coming up the road. They had red ribbons in their buttonholes, and rifles over their shoulders. I stopped them and asked them if they would carry the wood in for me: I would pay for it with pleasure. They looked at each other, whispered, and at last one said, as if bestowing a favour on me:

" We might, but it will be sixty crowns for the cubic yard."

"Have you taken leave of your senses? You know it won't take you an hour to carry the whole lot in."

" Well, if it doesn't suit you, carry it yourself," and they laughed sardonically. " You'll have to come to us in the end," one of them added. Then they sat down on the edge of the ditch opposite the gate, lit their pipes and looked on maliciously to see what I would do next. I turned my back on them, picked up a log and dragged it into the yard.

The men sat and looked on. I had to go in and out a good many times, and was soon panting with the unusual exertion; my hands got wet and sore with the damp wood. Then suddenly my sister's children appeared. They got two poles and we carried the logs in on the improvised stretcher. On the road two little boys and a girl came strolling towards the farm. They stopped, looked on for a while, and then they too joined us. Now the work proceeded fast, and within an hour the wood was all stacked in the yard.

While we worked the two men sat on the edge of the ditch opposite, smoked, spat, and addressed provoking remarks at us. When I closed the gate I could not resist shouting across to them: "Good of you to have stayed here. At least you saw of what mettle we are made. We managed your job although you couldn't manage ours."

The log-pulling tired me out—and that did me good. For fatigue softened my troubles, and when I went to bed I fell asleep at once. But I must have slept only a short time, for suddenly I dreamt that somebody was standing in front of my window and knocking. In the semi-consciousness of awakening I listened. My room was on the first floor. I jumped up. Violent shooting was going on near the house and the windows rattled in their frames. Then a long appalling howl rent the night, steps ran down the hillside, and everything lapsed into silence.

I lay awake for a long time. A curious light came through the latticework of my blinds which overlooked a piece of waste ground. I listened. There were steps in the neighbourhood. Something was happening out there. Should I go and see? . . . I hesitated for some time. My limbs were heavy with fatigue. Then at last I went stealthily to the window. Soldiers were standing in front of the empty villa which stood next to ours and were supporting a hatless man who seemed to be wounded or insensible. A small shrivelled form held an electric torch in its hand and fumbled with the lock of the door. The shadow which he cast on the white wall was like that of a hunch-backed cat. The door opened and they all went in.

My first thought was "I must telephone to the police!" Then I realized that even that impulse belonged to the past. What good would it be? There is nobody who can maintain order. I thought of the fugitives in our woods. The country was swarming with deserters, released convicts, small bands of burglars. We shall have to get used to it—we shall have to get used to many things.

And again there was firing down in the valley. Although the danger of remaining longer in this deserted neighbourhood still worried me, I was too tired to absorb fresh troubles, and went to sleep.

CHAPTER V

November 3rd.

A raven sat on a branch of the chestnut tree. It did not fly away when I opened my window, but sat there like a stuffed bird and stared with half-closed eyes into the yard. Near the black bird a few big red leaves fluttered on the bare tree, like bleeding scraps of flesh on a skeleton. And the raven sat on top of the skeleton against the rusty sky and rubbed its beak now and then against the branches as if it would scrape some carrion from it. Then again for a long time it sat motionless and stared unconcernedly at the ground beneath it. Suddenly it swayed as if it were going to fall, sprang clumsily away from the branch, and slowly took its flight into the autumnal air. Whither is it going and what is happening there?

Alarming news comes from all parts of the country. Home-coming soldiers and inflamed mobs are pillaging everywhere. As yet the news relates to no definite locality, for there is no post, and the newspapers pass over in silence anything that might create prejudice against the new power, yet the glare of conflagration is to be seen in all directions. Many people fled from the capital after the 31st of October, but in vain; risings awaited them in the very places where they hoped for safety.

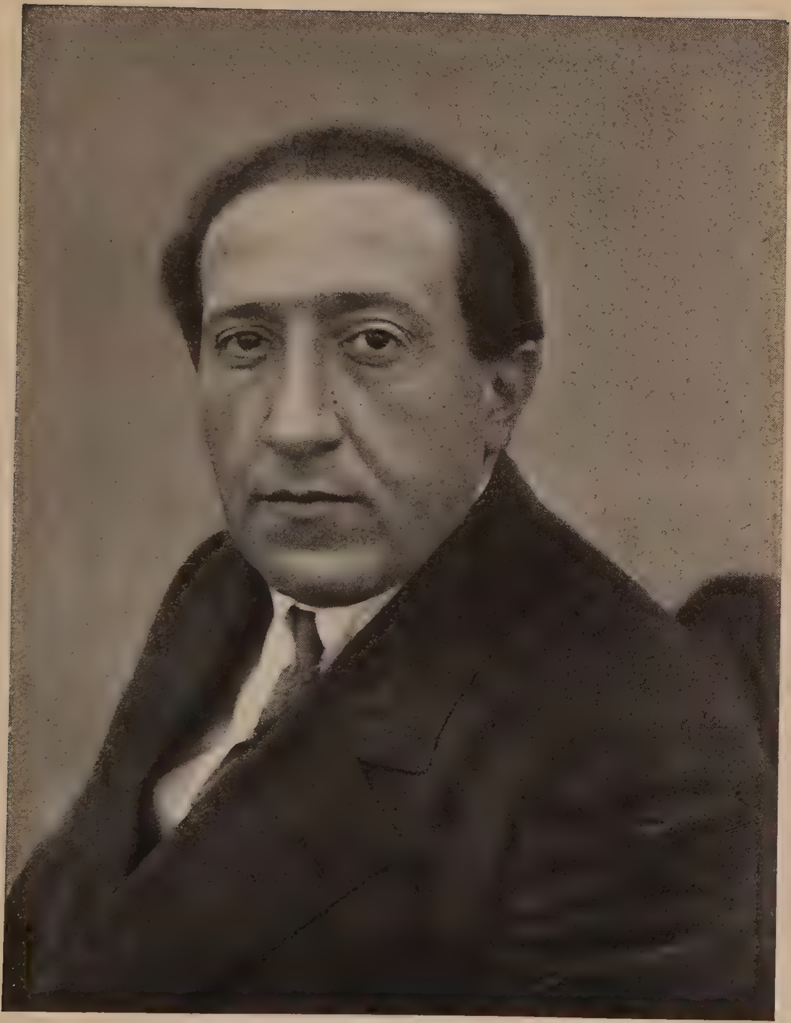
The government took good care that this should be so. Károlyi's party, as well as the socialist and radical party, got together agitators whose duty it was to incite the lower classes. And these did not confine their attention to the returning soldiers, but lectured the peaceful country folk concerning " the results of the glorious revolution and the dangers of the counter-revolution." They threw firebrands wherever a conflagration was likely, and blew into flames such smouldering fires of revolt as they could find.

At the tram station the newsboy openly offered for sale the papers of subscribers: no more newspapers will be delivered, and those who want one must go and fetch it, they rudely asserted. They all seem to have learnt the same lesson. The voice of the street becomes coarser day by day and in every word there is an intonation that savours of class hatred.

Crowds gathered in the town. Meetings were being held everywhere. In front of the House of Parliament a few thousand workmen and the people of the Ghetto had assembled. Speeches inciting to violence were heard on all sides. The contractor Heltai, now commander of the garrison, and a socialist agitator called Bokányi, addressed the crowd:

" Down with Kingship! Down with the House of Lords! We want new elections! But the elections won't be made by Lord Lieutenants but by the People's Commissaries!"

The People's Commissaries . . . Trotski and Lenin's henchmen in Hungary! So now the rebellion which dubbed itself the national revolution dares to speak openly of these! Everything here is being ordered after the Russian pattern. In the barracks the men of the garrison have dismissed their officers, elected representatives, and constituted Soldiers' Councils, which are developing into a new power. The head of this new power is a socialist journalist called Joseph Pogány-Schwarz. The vice-presidents are Imre Csernyák, a cashiered officer, and Teodor Sugár-Singer, a Galileist with a shady past. Pogány has declared that "the military council can have only one programme: the final abolition of the army!" and while day by day he arms more workmen with the help of the socialist party organisation, he dissolves feverishly the old Hungarian army. Nor does the Minister of War remain inactive: he has organised Zionist guards and has armed the members of the Maccabean Club.



JOSEPH POGÁNY *alias* SCHWARTZ.

(*To face p. 7*

Ladislaus Fényes, who from being a journalist has turned into the Government Commissary of National Guards, has enlisted and equipped more and more vagabonds and escaped convicts with sailors' uniforms.

A motor-car passed me, going slowly. It was a beautiful car and its window was ornamented with a label: "National property, to be protected." Near the label, inside the car, I saw the face of Michael Károlyi. I was in no laughing mood, yet I could not help laughing at this. "National property!" . . . The nation must be in a sad plight indeed. "To be protected!" . . . Is that the only thing which is to receive protection?

By Károlyi's side his wife was visible. Now and then there was a cheer—"The King's car," said somebody near me. I felt suddenly sick. He goes about in the King's car and is cheered. Stephen Tisza travels in a hearse and stones are hurled at him. The face of Tisza appeared so vividly in my thoughts that it seemed to stand before me . . . I remembered a summer afternoon during the war. Mixing with the crowd, Tisza came towards me in a light summer suit. The descendant of a long line of horsemen he was slender and looked young; his shoulders were broad, his waist narrow, but his face was worn and as if shrunken with grief. Deep wrinkles ran to the corners of his mouth, and as I recollected him I thought of the strong, sad look in his eyes and the movements of his shoulders. Only his shoulders moved; he walked with an easy, elastic gait, as if he were strolling along a forest path, and his hands swung lightly . . .

The vision passed, and I was brought back to earth by some unkempt vagabonds cheering Károlyi. And the living man there in the car seemed more like a corpse than the dead man of my thoughts. His long, bloodless body was thin and bent. His narrow head, with its artificial stern expression, lolled on his shoulder as if it were too heavy for his neck to support. His watery, squinting eyes shifted blankly from side to side. His mouth was slightly open, as if his long, round chin had drawn down his fleshy cheeks. I remembered an ivory paper-knife I had once seen, the handle of which was carved to represent an unhealthy looking head, worn smooth by much use. He reminded me of that sallow ivory head, the neck of which had been turned into a spiral, like a screw. The screw of Károlyi's neck had come loose, and his head dropped sideways. His wife was rouged in a doll-like fashion and her beautiful big eyes sparkled. Her voluptuous young mouth smiled in rapture, and she seemed to be drinking her success from the air greedily.

I looked after her. The car had long disappeared but it seemed to me as if the smile of those painted lips had left a trail of corruption over the suffering, harassed people. It spread and spread . . . Stephen Tisza's body is covered with blood. The frontiers of the country are bleeding. The enemy is victorious without having vanquished us. The army goes to pieces; the throne has fallen. St. Stephen's crown has lost Croatia and Slavonia. The rabble robs and pilfers. A Serbian army has crossed the frontier.

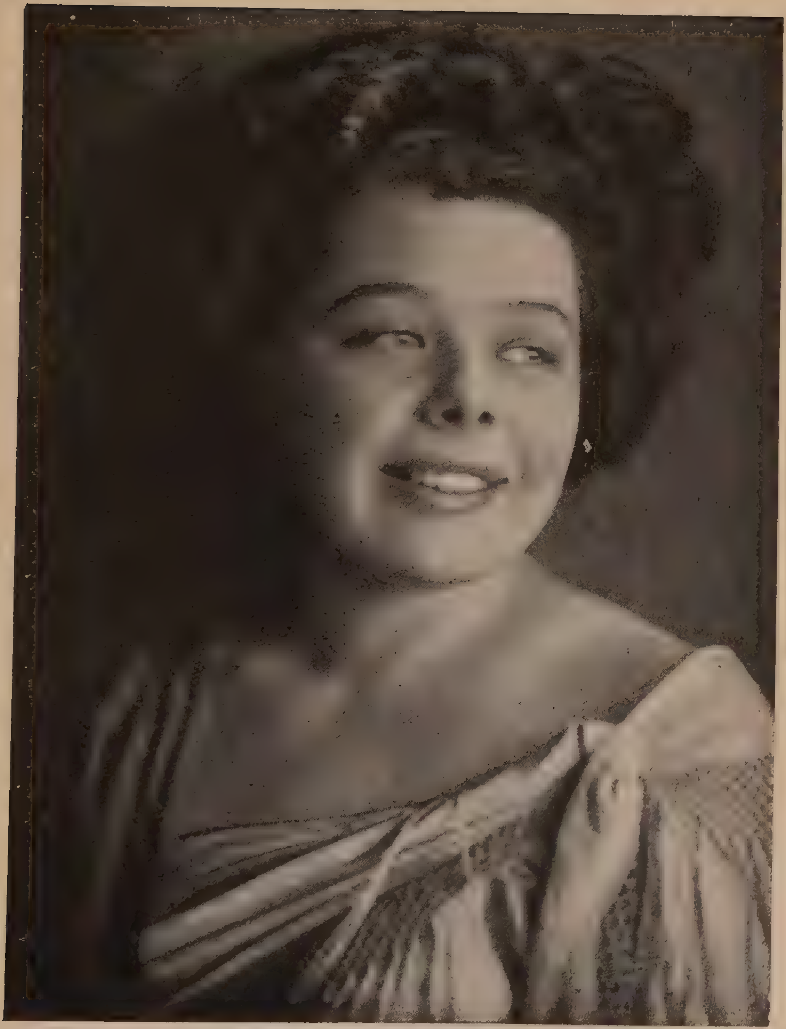
And the painted lips smile, smile . . .

Only a few days ago Michael Károlyi had said in jest:

"The smaller the country becomes the greater shall I be. When I was leader of the opposition, the whole of Hungary was intact; when I became Prime Minister Croatia and Slavonia had gone; there will be five counties when I am President, and one only when I shall be King."

If only the miserable deceived millions could have heard this, they for whose benefit he proclaimed on the 31st of October with the recklessness of the gambler: "I alone can save Hungary!" They believed him! . . . And yet mysterious Nature itself had warned the country to beware of him.

The deformed offspring of a consanguineous marriage, the heir to the enormous entailed possessions of the Károlyis, was born with a cleft palate and a hare-lip. He was fourteen years old when an operation was performed on him which enabled him, against the will of Divine Providence, to learn to speak—so that he might beguile his nation and his country into destruction. A silver palate was put into his mouth. The boy struggled and suffered. He wrestled with the words, and if his poor efforts were



COUNTESS MICHAEL KÁROLYI
(*née* COUNTESS KATINKA ANDRÁSSY).

(*To face p.* 72.)

not understood by his companions he went into violent fits of temper. The only one who could have understood him, his mother, died early. His grandmother and his sister guided the poor boy through his unhappy early days. His progress in school was slow and the results of examinations deplorable. He passed his *baccalaureat* at the same time as my brother, yet he practically knew nothing and could not even spell. He passed all the same: " The poor, young invalid!" That served him as a passport everywhere. Fate decreed that the misshapen youth should live, and he lived to take a cruel revenge for its cruelties.

His physical shortcomings prevented anyone from expecting much from him, so that almost everything he learned, did or said, surpassed the extremely low standard his family had set for him. His relations recognised this " ability " and admired him. And this delusion was the root of Károlyi's ever-increasing vanity. He became convinced that he was an extraordinary man and that he was predestined for wonderful things.

When he came of age he entered into possession of one of the greatest estates in Hungary. He could dispose freely of an enormous income. He had no need to keep accounts, and he kept none. He spent recklessly. He gambled, indulged in orgies. People laughed at him. Nobody took him seriously. His spendthrift life, cards, and the political rôle he assumed later, absorbed fabulous sums. But his fortune could still stand it. He was surrounded by sycophants. And he believed the flatteries of his cringing parasites. His megalomania at last became pathological. Without possessing the necessary aptitude, he now conceived the idea of making up for what he had neglected in his idle youth. He began to read. And when husbandry, political economy, sociology, were accumulated in an indigestible hotch-potch in his brain, he aspired to become a leader of men.

At the head of the conservatives stood Stephen Tisza, by race and tradition the very model of Hungarian conservatism; another faction of this party was headed by Count Julius Andrássy. In these camps Károlyi could never be anything but a secondary figure; leadership was beyond his reach. This fact drove him to the extreme left. Spurred by his unhealthy ambition for power he assumed the absurd position of leader of the radical democracy, a demagogue playing with national catchwords, though he was an aristocrat by tradition, had no national feeling whatever, and had constantly proclaimed himself essentially a Frenchman at heart, the spiritual descendant of his French great-grandmother. His faction was in need of a figurehead. It found one in him.

The clash between him and Tisza came when Tisza, then the President of the Commons, tired of the barren fights of eternal obstruction, and in anticipation of the future extension of the franchise, wanted to assure the decency of the proceedings in the Hungarian Parliament by a revision of the standing rules of procedure. The parties sounded the alarm. Personal feelings were much embittered. Andrássy and Károlyi found themselves in the same camp and both were mortally offended when Tisza imposed his haughty will with merciless firmness.

It was by the application of the new rules that Károlyi happened later to be expelled from the House by physical force at the hands of the parliamentary guards. On this occasion he was heard to declare, foaming with rage, that he would get even with Tisza, even though it should be at the cost of his country's ruin. His frenzy became akin to dementia as the result of the duel he fought about this time with Tisza, who managed to impress him once more with his contempt even at the moment of giving him armed satisfaction. Henceforth it was always the opposite to anything Tisza approved of that he desired, and consequently his gambler's instinct forced him to put his money always on some other card than that on which the nation, through Tisza's foresight, had risked its stakes.

By this time his entourage was composed almost exclusively of Freemasons, and his person became the centre of attraction of that suspicious gang whose aim was to incite Hungarians against Hungarians, and Christians against Christians, so that it might gain the upper hand—in proof of the adage *inter duos litigantes tertius gaudet.* Shortly before the war Károlyi went with some of his adherents to the United States to collect party funds. No account of those funds was ever rendered.

The outbreak of the war found him in Paris. His financial position had now become strained. The life-interest in his property, heavily mortgaged, left him no surplus. Yet he went on spending and gambling. Nobody knew whence his money came. Nor did anybody know why he alone was allowed to leave France at the outbreak of the war, while obscure individuals were mercilessly interned for its duration.

It was after his return that Károlyi began to spread the infection which, on the 31st of October 1918, like a septic sore that had long been festering, broke out in putrid suppuration.

. . . .

The lamp-lighter came up the street. The glass of the lamps rattled and the little flames flared up. Over the bridge an arc of light appeared in the mist rising from the river. In the tunnel under the Castle Hill old-fashioned lamps lit up the damp walls. Two soldiers were walking in front of me, otherwise the tunnel was practically empty. Their voices resounded from the roof—they were quarrelling in a strange thieves' jargon. On the other side a well-dressed man came towards us on the pavement. The two soldiers discussed something in their incomprehensible lingo, then crossed together to the other side, saluted the stranger and, as if asking him a question, bent towards him. Obviously they were asking him the time. The gentleman drew his watch. One of the soldiers grasped him suddenly by the shoulders, the other bent over him. A loud shout rolled away under the vault, and next moment the two soldiers were running in their heavy boots with loud clatter towards the other end of the tunnel. It was quickly done and created no sensation. The whole thing was quite in keeping with our daily life nowadays.

This night vagabond soldiers again visited the empty villa and shots were fired near the garden. The dogs barked no more. Have they been shot, or have they got accustomed to it?

. . . .

November 4th.

I went through the rooms again. In front of the gate the carriage was awaiting to take us away for the winter, from among the trees to among the houses. The small light of the carriage-lamps filtered hesitatingly through the mist on to the bare branches of the shrubs. A vague anxiety took hold of me. It seemed to me that hitherto we had looked on from the shore, but that now we were going to wade into the turbulent, muddy flood. Whither will its torrent carry us; what is to be our fate?

I went all over the house, and, one after the other, opened the doors of the cupboards and the drawers. I left everything open so that if burglars did break into the house in winter the locks might not be forced, the cupboards not smashed with hatchets. The fireplaces cooled down slowly. We had had no fires during the day in order to avoid accidents after we had gone. In one of the grates the embers still retained a little warmth, the others were as cold as the dead. I fastened the grated shutters in every room. In the semi-darkness, against the whitewashed walls, the old furniture, the old story-telling engravings, friends of my childhood, the big vase, the parrot-chandeliers, the coloured glasses in which the flowers of a hundred summers had blossomed in the rooms of my mother and my grandmother, all looked at me as if in sorrow. I looked also at my books, the old Bible on the shelf, at everything for which no room could be found in the vans and which had to be left behind.

Things too have tears . . . What if the empty house were pillaged? If I were never to see again the dear things full of memories? . . . Why do you leave us here? the abandoned things seemed to ask, and I felt as if I were parting from devoted, living beings, which patiently shared our fate.

My mother called from below, waiting, ready to start, in the hall with my brother, who had come for us so that he might be there should the carriage be waylaid. As we went out of it the old house lapsed into lethargy and everything closed its eyes. The key turned, the pebbles clattered on the drive, and the carriage went slowly down the slope of the hill.

At the bridge over the Devil's Ditch my brother-in-law was waiting with his little daughter, and she got into the carriage. Reckless soldiers had overrun the hills and life was so insecure that they did not dare to keep the young girl at home. In town things may be quieter . . . Beyond the cemetery we came to the booth of the excisemen. We waited for a time in the mist and as no policeman, no exciseman appeared, we passed on through the open barrier. The outlines of armed soldiers and sailors peopled the ill-lit streets of Buda. The forms of a few frightened citizens who were trying to get home appeared now and then, but were soon absorbed by the night.

Beyond the bridge over the Danube the town was floating in light. Big arc-lamps were burning, as of old when a victory was reported from the battle-fields. Flags floated from the houses. In the fashionable streets the crowds thronged for their evening walk, and as the carriage passed Károlyi's portrait could be seen in the shop windows among stockings and ribbons, furs and sausages.

I felt relieved when we came out of the sea of people into quieter streets. The carriage stopped at our house in Stonemason Street. Under the porch a half-turned-on gas lamp was burning, which threw a light up to the ceiling but left everything under our feet in darkness. The house seemed to have become shabby during the summer. The staircase was dull and ugly. The fires smoked and nothing was as it used to be when we came in olden times to our friendly winter home. Disorder, covered furniture, draped pictures. It was like wearing summer clothes on a frosty winter day.

"Well, we are settled for the winter now, mother dear," I laughed, to make it seem more cheerful. My mother laughed too and we both pretended to be happy.

A clumsy little German maid rushed about among the trunks and did nothing. Our faithful farmer neighbour, who had kindly escorted the luggage, was struggling with the fires. The housekeeper boiled some water over a spirit lamp. My mother went to and fro, and wherever her hand reached order sprang up. All at once the little green room assumed a friendly appearance and tea steamed in the cups on the white covered table. Home was home again and we smiled at each other.

"The many war winters have passed, and this is going to pass too."

"This is worse than the winters of the war," my mother said with unusual gloom.

I looked involuntarily at the window. Out there beyond, a big town was breathing, but it was impossible to get information from its chaos. The scum had got the upper hand; was any resistance being organised? It was impossible that things should remain like this! One regiment coming back in order, one energetic commander, and Károlyi's band will tumble from power.

Newspapers lay on the table, and my eyes fell on a proclamation of Károlyi, which he had made in the presence of the representatives of the Budapest press: "From the 1st of November Hungary becomes a neutral state," he declared. "This tired government . . ." He did not say what the Entente powers would say to this neutrality. Further on he spoke of the Minister of War . . . "He had immortal merits in obtaining peace. History will not fail to recognise the credit due to him; Linder has rendered to the Hungarian people services of eternal value and usefulness . . ."

I remembered the disgraceful scene in front of the House of Parliament, a scene cunningly contrived by those in the background . . . "I do not want to see any more soldiers . . ." I had heard since that it was for this sentence, promised beforehand, that the social democrats gave the Ministry of War to the obscure Linder. The price of his portfolio was the disruption of the army. And Károlyi spoke of history's gratitude!

On the last page of the paper I found accidentally an extract of the conditions of the armistice.

Immediate disarmament, the withdrawal of our armies from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier . . . When I read on my eyes faltered. Then they were filled with alarm. The last terrible condition (unknown in modern warfare) followed : Prisoners of war to be returned without any reciprocity! This seemed incomprehensible. Our enemies want to retain as white slaves soldiers, heroes who had faced

Photo. Erdelyi, Budapest.

FIUME
(HUNGARY'S ONLY PORT—TAKEN FROM HER BY THE PEACE TREATY).

(*To face p.* 78.)

them armed in open battle. Then another pain stabbed me: We must lose the coast, Dalmatia, the dreamy blue islands, the fleet to whose flag so much glory was attached, the monitors of the Danube. We must deliver up all floating material, the commercial harbours, and ships.

The scorched, lifeless Carso, wild tracts of rock under an azure sky, great murmuring forests, and there, down below, the sea, and, like corals and shells on the shore, Fiume, Hungary's gate to the seas. It was indeed a bitter thought. Italy, with thy hundred ports, why dost thou rob us? We have only this one! It was a tiny fishing village, like so many others in the bay of Quarnero. We made it what it is: it sprung up from Hungarian labour, the gold from Hungarian harvests of corn and wine has flowed there to raise dams, to build quays, to work a wonder among the stones. Fiume is our only port . . .

And beyond, that which was not ours but which we loved dearly, the rosy bastions of the Dolomites, reaching into the clouds, the home of the Tyrolese, and Riga on the shores of Lake Garda, peaks and ravines, sacred by so much Hungarian blood. What the war could not take is peace to take from us?

Beside myself, I walked up and down in my room till morning, haunted by despair, utter, complete despair.

. . . .

November 5th.

In place of the free morning of the woods, the gloom of a narrow street looked in through my window. The wall of the opposite house drove my eyes back to my books, my furniture, my pictures. Now I saw their beauty again, and I was glad that they were there with me.

The many old books in the bookcase behind my writing-table ran up the wall like the fading gold of an ancient embroidery. Above, on the red wall, in a frame surmounted by the Pope's triple crown, in a soft haze the Madonna of Venice by Sebastiano Ricci. The portrait of Castruccio Castracani and a Dutch Old Man in a sable-bordered green mantle. The clock ticked under the Empire mirror. From the escritoire with the many little drawers, a copy of San Lorenzo the child-monk, the most beautiful piece of sculpture of the early Renaissance, looked into my room with a youthful challenge.

The fading gold of ancient frames, the stale green of old furniture. The colours toyed with each other in silence and the red curtains and walls threw a russet light over things as if a magic sunset had been caught between the window and the door.

Next to my room, in the small drawing-room, the old water-colours hung over the sofa. My ancestor, the powdered, pigtailed old gentleman, in his romantic breastplate of the Hardegger Cuirassiers, my grandfather's handsome young head, and beautiful fair women with locks on the sides of their faces. Opposite, on the piano, between the golden Old Vienna vases, stood my mother's portrait as a child, in all its delicacy. And on the mantelpiece the butterfly-shaped pendulum of the marble clock told me endless tales of the past.

I loved all these things so much, or rather I became conscious of my love for them because fear was now added to my affection. Shall we keep them? Will they remain our own?

In the evening I was on Red Cross duty at the railway station. The clock on St. Rocus' chapel proclaimed it half past six. The trams, crammed full, raced down the street, with people hanging on outside like bunches of grapes. It was impossible to get into one. I had to walk, and as I came to the more remote parts of the town I remembered October 31st. The pavement was thronged with criminal-looking men, suspicious vagabonds, drunken sailors, Galician Jews in their gabardines. Whence did this rabble come? Or did it always live here among us, only we did not know it?

The neighbourhood of the station was swarming with people. Disarmed, ragged soldiers sold cigarettes and sticky sweets; one or two asked for alms. Near the wall, on a stair covered with a waterproof, some obscene books were lying about. Dirty men sold pencils, purses, tobacco. A boy in a gabardine offered broken bits of chocolate from a tray. There was something Balkan in this noisy scene: a red cross flag floated over the murky street. People went freely in and out through the doors of the station. No tickets were required—anyhow, it would be impossible to stop the mob—the guards had gone. Russian soldiers in sheepskin caps, Roumanian and Serbian prisoners of war, like a stampeded herd, broke through the throng. These at least could go home. And my hand went to my heart.

Wounded soldiers, drinking tea and eating slices of bread, sat on the benches in the carbolic-scented, stuffy air of the former Royal waiting-room, which was lit up sparsely. It was the first time I had been on duty since the Revolution. During the many years of war so many stretchers had gone through this Red Cross room, so much suffering and moaning and knocking of crutches, that it seemed to me now as if all these turned back with reproaches and asked continually: "What good was that sea of suffering, all these deaths, if this is to be the end of the road?"

Round the low-burning gas-stove sat some sergeants of the Army Medical Corps. Further away, in a cold corner, a few disabled officers had retired. The insignia of their rank on their collars were missing. They were pale and thin. One of them leant his elbows on his knees and buried his face in his hands. Another's head was bowed down on his chest. Never in my life have I seen men more dejected than these: they just sat there without moving. And while I looked at them I realised with an aching heart that the horrible betrayal, "the glorious revolution" has wounded the wounded, and far, far away, in the many soldiers' graves, has killed the dead anew.

A hospital train arrived; it brought Germans. In silent line one stretcher after the other defiled through the door, and the men were laid in a gray row on the floor. Under torn, bloody, great-coats, pale patient ghosts. A hospital from the Southern front had been evacuated in haste. "The Serbians are advancing . . ."

The old bandages soaked with blood were dirty on the men: an awful stench of corruption spread over the place. And between the stretchers a Jewish sergeant, in brand new field-uniform, with golden pince-nez, sporting a red cockade, walked haughtily up and down. I had never seen him in the place before. "I have been delegated by the Soldiers' Council," he remarked. And this man, whose very appearance betrayed the fact that he had never been a soldier during the war, now stood there, his legs apart, between the wounded and spoke to them with impertinent condescension.

I told the doctor that the men required new bandages, it was two weeks now since they had been put on. "There are no bandages," said the doctor sadly and went back to his room. I did not see him again that evening. The reeking air was now and then rent by a moan, a quiet sigh. That was all. But nobody spoke. The men thanked one with a weary look for the bad decoction and the bread that tasted of sawdust.

"Our men are still fighting against the Serbians," a fair Bavarian mumbled, when I leant down over him. It was only when the red-cockaded sergeant had retired and the other orderly had gone to smoke outside on the platform that there was some talk between the stretchers.

"How are things at home?" the Germans asked. "We have no newspapers, we know nothing. People say that there they have made a revolution too and that they want to banish the Kaiser."

Wounded Hungarian soldiers sat on one of the benches and talked of the Italian front:

"It was after our men had laid down their arms that the Italians began to shell us. They used heavy artillery and killed whole regiments. Whole divisions were surrounded. They report three hundred thousand prisoners and a thousand guns. All is lost."

"Newspapers too reported that the Italians continued to fire at us for twenty-four hours after we had fired the last shot."

"More men were killed during the armistice than in the bloodiest battle," an officer grumbled.

He who had buried his face in his hands now looked up:

"Pacificism has begun with more bloodshed than war. If we had held the front for another two weeks what has happened to us would have happened in Italy. That was the reason they hurried so. That was why we had to capitulate without conditions. The trouble was with the reserves; they were in communication with Budapest. They received wireless messages from the National Council . . ."

This talk reminded me of the message Károlyi sent in the name of the government to the Higher Command: "I freely accept responsibility for everything." He also declared that: "The popular Hungarian government desires to take all steps for peace negotiations itself." Originally he wanted to go personally to Padua, but was prevented by the Higher Command. Yesterday the rumour got about that as he could not negotiate with the Italians who had been charged by the Entente to represent it in its dealings with the Monarchy, he had appealed to Franchet d'Esperay, the Commander-in-chief on the Balkan front. The French General had answered that before he would negotiate with him, all the troops on the Hungaro-Serbian frontier must retire fifteen kilometres into Hungarian territory and that the German troops be disarmed within a fortnight. The abandonment of Hungarian territory was required . . . We must oust our last friends, who still defend our frontiers which our own people have forsaken. Give up Hungarian territory . . . There can be only one answer to that: a refusal . . . But rumour says otherwise: Károlyi is going with his adherents to Belgrade, perhaps he has gone already . . . Incomprehensible! Surely I have not dreamt it? I read in a newspaper the report of the Chief of the General Staff that in consequence of the armistice all hostilities had ceased on the Italian front. What are the negotiations of Belgrade about?

There was a great noise in front of the door. Tea was clamoured for and rough voices filled the room. Some of the talk was bitter. Most of the men coming from Austria had been robbed of everything. In Vienna Red Guards robbed the Hungarians at the railway stations. Their haversacks had been taken, some had their coats torn off their backs, their boots, rations, even their pocket-knives had been filched from them. They came home hungry and furious and clamouring.

Then I caught sight of the sergeant with the red cockade. He mixed with the men and whispered secretively with first one then another. I asked a tall soldier, with a peasant's face, if all the men were coming home. Were there no troops remaining on the frontier to defend the country?

"To be sure we don't stop there; we are going home; we even left the guns as soon as the news reached us that we need no longer be soldiers." He produced a crumpled copy of a radical evening paper from the pocket of his coat and waved it in his hand. "Here, in this paper too it is written that the Minister of War has said himself: 'Now we have peace.'"

So the War Minister's announcement: "I do not want to see any more soldiers" had already reached the front. The fatal words were lying in wait on every road by which Hungarian soldiers were coming home.

It was about eleven o'clock when I went off duty. As I went through the gate two men slunk to the wall. They were soldiers—officers. One of them spoke excitedly and snatched at his head. He gave me the impression that he was mad. "I brought the regiment home fully equipped and in perfect order, reported at the War Office, offered my services to the country, and they told me to disarm and go home . . ."

I heard no more, but that was enough. We could have no hope in those who had come as far as this. But perhaps somewhere else, far from the town, somebody will be found who can keep his men in hand, march them to the capital, and disperse Károlyi's rabble. That is the only hope left to us, there is no other.

Through the noisy thoroughfares the tram wound its way into dark side-streets. From St. Rocus' chapel I walked home. In our street the steps of a patrol resounded. I turned rapidly into the house. Behind me the shriek of a woman rent the silence of the night. As I ran up the stairs my mother stood in the ante-room waiting for me. Goodness knows how long she had been waiting, but she did not reproach me. I could see by her face that she was worried. Only when I went to bed did she say imploringly: "Another time don't stay so late."

CHAPTER VI

November 6th.

I FEEL so queer. I feel as though there were an open wound in my head from which blood was spreading over my thoughts. How long can one bear this kind of thing? Something must happen . . . We always say that, and yet one hopeless day passes after the other. All that happens is that we get news of some further disaster. The whole country is being pillaged. Escaped convicts, straggling Russian prisoners, degraded soldiers, murderers are plundering country houses, farms, whole villages, and inciting the mob to violence. Alarming news comes from all parts of the country.

Somebody came this morning from the County of Arad. Algyest; an unknown little village, which does not even appear on the map, and yet it is very dear to my heart. There, on the banks of the river Körös, are an old garden and an ancient house under the poplars . . . It has been broken into and pillaged. And as I heard of this, I understood the tragedy of every despoiled castle, of every ruined home in Hungary. Smoking walls, empty rooms . . . The venerable manor-house with its loggia was not mine, yet this misfortune touched me to the quick: they have injured the past summers of my childhood. They have trodden down the paths along which, in memory, I still wandered with my grandmother. They have defiled the slope of the chapel hill where I played so often in happier days They did not shrink from breaking into the crypt. They even robbed those who had retired there for their last sleep in the dim twilight, generation after generation.

The incited Roumanian peasants wanted to beat the inhabitants of the house to death; and while the latter fled secretly, the wild horde, under the guidance of the village schoolmaster, rushed in with scythes and hatchets; and whatever they could not carry off they destroyed in an orgy of havoc. The fine old books of the library they tore from their shelves and trampled into the mud. The portraits of the ancient landlords they hacked with axes, pierced their eyes and cut out the canvas in the place of the heart. Persian carpets were cut into bits and carried off. Like madmen they smashed and destroyed till night fell; then they made bonfires with the furniture many centuries old. The old well they filled to the brim with debris of Old Vienna porcelain, with splinters of broken crystal.

How often have I not looked into the clear water of that well at the reflection of my childish face, and put my tongue out at myself; how often have I not chased butterflies near it and on the sunlit paths of the warm, rose-scented garden, which led beyond the firs into the wilds . . . Velvety moss grew on the edge of the roads, under the shade of the trees. It grew also on the stone seat at the bottom of the garden, where one was safe from the disturbing intrusion of grown-ups. One could climb up on the seat and look over the hedge into the main road. Rumbling carts passed in the soft white dust, and the Roumanian peasants used to doff their caps to me when they caught sight of me. "Naptye buna!" I nodded to them. I knew old Todyert, and Lisandru and Petru, who was my mother's godchild. They spoke their own tongue, nobody ever harmed them, their teacher knew nothing but Roumanian, nor their priest, and yet they were paid and looked after by the Hungarian state. So it was elsewhere too. The Hungarians did not oppress its foreign-tongued brethren, who for centuries in troublesome times, escaping the oppression of Mongols, Tartars, Turks, and of their own blood, sought refuge in our midst. Had it oppressed them there would be no German, Slovak, Ruthenian, or Serb in our country to-day; and yet these people shout now in mad hatred that

"THE TRAGEDY OF EVERY RUINED HOME."

everybody who is Hungarian ought to be knocked on the head.

To attain this result two parties worked hard. The Roumanian propaganda and Károlyi's satellites undermined the hill from both sides. They met halfway in the tunnel, the Roumanian agitators and the Hungarian traitors. That was one of the plans of Károlyi's camp. To create the *sine qua non* of their power, disruption, they sent their agents to the regions inhabited by these nationalities and stirred them up against the Hungarians. In the Hungarian regions it was class hatred that was used to incite the people to robbery. And the people became intoxicated: the sufferings of the long years of war boiled up furiously.

Everybody expected that the soldiers, when they came back one day from the battlefield, would question those who had exploited and starved the people and got rich by staying at home while the soldiers were suffering at the front. In the last years of the war the embittered soldiers at the front talked of pogroms "when the war was over." The nation was preparing for a reckoning and its fist rose slowly, terribly, over the heads of the guilty.

But a devilish power had now suddenly thrust that fist aside. The accumulated hatred must be turned into a new channel away from the Galician immigrants, profiteers, usurers—against the Hungarian manors and castles, against the Hungarian authorities.

It was with shame and bitterness that I heard the news. The country folk here and there, even those of Hungarian blood, destroy, under the guidance of government agitators, the homes of the Hungarian landlords. The people satisfy their own conscience by repeating what they have been taught: "Now that there is a republic, everything belongs to everybody." And well-to-do farmers go with their carts to the manors to carry off other people's property. The authorities are helpless: the fury of the excited people has driven away the magistrates and petty officials. The excuse for this is readily forthcoming. During the war-time administration the local government officials were charged to collect from the producer the necessary wheat and cattle, and they also selected those who had to do war-work. They distributed sugar, flour, oil and the necessary subsidies. Consequently they were frequently accused of having kept the surplus for themselves and they were hated for everything that went wrong. This hatred served as a side-channel to those who feared pogroms, and cunningly they made use of it. About three thousand of these officials were driven with cudgels from the villages and many were beaten to death.

Thus it happened that the communes were left to themselves. As a result of agitation the people would not listen any longer to their priests, and many of the school-teachers had become tainted with the infection. Order disappeared. Disguised as popular apostles, the agitators of the National Council—journalists, waiters, cabaret-dancers, kinematograph actors and white-slave traffickers, invaded the country-side. Practically on the day of the revolution in Budapest local National Councils were formed everywhere. As if executing a pre-arranged plan, at an inaudible command, the Jewish leaders of the trade-unions, the Jewish officials of the workmen's clubs, usurped authority. They knew the battle cries that impressed the crowd, and they kept in close touch with the rebels in the capital. They at once took their seats in the communal councils and assumed the direction of affairs amid the confusion they themselves had produced. Appealing to the National Council of Pest they issued orders to provincial towns and villages as well, and in this humiliating state of lethargy everybody obeyed.

Károlyi's revolution was engineered almost exclusively by Jews. They make no secret of it, they boast of it. And with a never satisfied greed they gather the reward of their achievement. They occupy every empty place. In the government there are officially three, in reality five, Jewish ministers.

Garami, Jászi, Kunfi, Szende and Diener-Dénes have control over the Ministries of Commerce, of the mayors and the communes. The vile spell which had benumbed the capital cast its evil eye over the Nationalities, of Public Welfare and Labour, of Finance and of Foreign Affairs. By means of the

Police department of the Home Office they have control over the police and the political secret service: they have placed at its head two Jews, former *agents provocateurs*. The right-hand man of the Minister of War is a Jew who was formerly a photographer. The president of the Press Bureau is a Jew and so is the Censor. Most of the members of the National Council are Jews. Jews are the Commander of the garrison, the Government Commissary of the Soldiers' Council, the head of the Workers' Council. Károlyi's advisers are all Jews, and the majority of those who started last night for Belgrade to meet the Commander-in-Chief of the Balkan front, the French General Franchet d'Esperay, are Jews.

Incomprehensible journey! Carefully hidden, but still there, in the semi-official paper of the government, there is given the news which ought to render any further negotiations concerning the armistice perfectly unnecessary. I have copied it word for word:

"In consequence of the armistice as agreed between the plenipotentiaries of the High Command of the Royal Italian Army, acting for the Allies and the United States of America on the one side and the plenipotentiaries of the High Command of the Austro-Hungarian Army on the other, all further hostilities on land, on water and in the air are to be suspended at 3 p.m. on the 4th of November all along the Austrian and Hungarian front."

What then do Károlyi and his associates want to negotiate about in Belgrade?

An angry protest rose in me. Michael Károlyi and his minister Jászi; Baron Hatvany, the delegate of the National Council; the Commissary of the Workers' Council, a radical journalist; the delegate of the Soldiers' Council; Captain Csernyák, a cashiered officer . . . how dare these men speak in the name of Hungary?

I became restless. The walls of my room seemed to be closing in upon me, caging me. The room, the house, the town, had all at once become too small for me. What was happening beyond them? Was salvation on its way? It must be quick, for the flood is rising, swelling, it has reached our neck, to-morrow it will drown us. I could stay at home no longer. I must do something; walk, run, tire myself out. The anxieties of the last few days have whipped me into action. Suddenly I realised that my own inactivity was part of the great culpable inactivity of the nation. I too was guilty of lethargy. No longer must I content myself with accusing others, no longer expect action from them alone. Dimly, despairingly, I realised that henceforward I must expect something from my own self.

But what could I do, I who have lived a retired and almost solitary life, I who could do nothing but love my country and depict its beauty with my pen? What is the good of speaking of one's country when a whole town, with a foreign soul, laughs in one's face? What good is its beauty when millions tread it under their feet?

Despondently I walked slowly through the badly lit, dingy streets. At the gate of the Museum a sailor was standing, a rifle over his shoulder and a revolver in his belt. Opposite, under the porch of the old House of Parliament, soldiers were unloading heavy boxes from a motor lorry and dragging them into the building. This building, in which Francis Deák had once poured out his soul before the National Assembly of old, was now the headquarters of the revolutionary Soldiers' Council. Its organiser, Joseph Pogány, whom Károlyi had nominated Government's Commissary, had by now risen to such power that he could effectively oppose the Minister of War.

"What is there in those boxes?" a slatternly servant girl asked a soldier.

"Bandages," replied the soldier, and winked at her; "but we bring the best of it at night!" As soon as he noticed me he shouted out threateningly: "Get away from here! Down from the foot-path!"

I noticed then that there were machine-guns on the lorry, and that two words were repeated on all the boxes: *Danger* and *Cartridges*.

The Minister of War orders the ammunition at the front to be thrown away, while the Commissary of the Soldiers' Council accumulates it in the heart of the capital. Is it accidental or is there a connection between the two?

I walked for a long time in my lonely sorrow, and presently I reached the banks of the Danube. In front of me the Elizabeth Bridge, like a crested monster, strode across the river with a single stride, its back shining with sundry lamps. Above it stood the solid mass of St. Gellert's Hill, and under it glided the river's cool stream, carrying with it dark, silent ships. Here and there a solitary murky pier clung to the shore, and the reflection of low-burning street-lamps slipped shuddering into the deep.

A breeze came from the hills. It will bring frost to-night. And at night the houses on the shore close their eyes so that they may see no more. For every now and then little, preying boats glide over the cold water. A shot is fired. There is a mysterious splash . . . Everybody knows about it ; nobody interferes. In 1918, between Buda and Pest, as in the lawless days of old, armed pirates stop ships. National sailor-guards play highwayman on the Danube !

I looked behind me. Among the badly-lit streets and dark houses who can tell where is the lair of robbers and murderers? The clamour of the busy streets, the silence of the alleys, hide crime. The town is blood-guilty: the murderers of Stephen Tisza walk freely among us.

A stranger turned the corner. I could not help thinking: was it he?—Or that other one who sat in a motor-car and smoked a cigar? Everything is possible here. Steps followed me, voices. Is he among those who are walking there?—One of those whose voices are raised in threats over there? The authorities are no longer pursuing their enquiries. The police searched only to make sure that it could not find. But Tisza's blood cannot be washed away. It is there and it cries to Heaven.

I reached home tired out. Why had I gone out at all? What did I want? Was I looking for anybody? At least I might have seen a familiar face coming towards me, greet me, stop and tell me something that would have raised hope. I might have heard that General Kövess was marching on Pest with his returning army, or that Mackensen had gathered the Széklers round him in Transylvania. So this was what I had been seeking! I wanted to hear the sound of a name, the name of a man who was brave and strong, who knew how to organise and how to give orders, who could lay his hand on destiny at the brink of the abyss.

I found my room warm and cosy, for my mother had lit a fire while I was out. Through the open door of the stove the light of the flames danced into the room and was reflected from the parquet flooring. Stray rays flickered to the book-case and passed over the gilding of old volumes.

Tea was brought in and my mother came with it. She was wearing a black silk dress with a white lace collar, and the scent she always used brought a faint delicate fragrance into the room. After the disorder of the muddy streets the purity of this quietude was striking, and already I felt refreshed.

Later on I had a visitor, Countess Armin Mikes, and her news dispelled my temporary peace of mind. She was tired, her face was drawn as though she had been ill, and her eyes were filled with tears. I knew what was passing within her: the death of Transylvania.

"Have you heard," I asked her hesitatingly, "that the United States have recognised Roumania's right over Transylvania? Her *right* . . . And our traitors are going to hand it over."

It was too terrible. The United States addressed the aboriginal Székler inhabitants concerning the rights of immigrant Roumanian shepherds. The United States: a young nation which, so far as civilization is concerned, did not exist at a time when Transylvania had already been united to Hungary for half a thousand years!

"Not an inch of ground could be taken from us even now if only the army made a stand on the frontier."

"If Tisza were alive!"

"If he were alive they would kill him again."

We became silent, and for a long time the only sound was the crackling of the embers in the stove.

"All conspired against him," at last said Countess Mikes. She was a close relation of Tisza and had been a faithful friend to him in the height of his power as well as in his downfall. "When I went there his blood was still on the floor of the hall. There was also the mark of a bullet . . . He lost very much blood. He bled to death, that is why his face became so frightfully white."

"And his wife?"

"She sat motionless near him and held his hand . . . Poor Stephen, his body was not yet cold when an officer presented himself at the house. He produced a paper which showed that he was aide-de-camp to Linder and said that he had orders to ascertain with his own eyes if Tisza was really dead. He wouldn't go until he had accomplished his task. A soldier was with him: he had been sent by the Soldiers' Council. The officer looked in at the door of the death chamber. When he saw that Tisza was dead, he had the cynical impudence to express the condolences of the whole government with the family. Béla Radvánsky told him that we did not require them. Later on somebody came from the police with a police surgeon. It was done for appearance's sake. Of course they couldn't trace the criminals . . . A telegram arrived from Károlyi, and a wreath—both were thrown away."

"But why hadn't Tisza gone away?"

"He said he would not go into hiding." Then my guest told me further details of the murder.

Already in the early morning of the fateful day people were loitering about the villa. Denise Almássy came early and begged Tisza to leave the place and to go to one of his friends, as his life was not safe there. Tisza answered that he would not go uninvited into any man's house. Meanwhile a crowd was gathering in the road outside. The mob, always ready to insult greatness in misfortune, cursed Tisza with threats. The crowd increased. The garden gate was broken in. Soldiers noisily invaded the place. A Jew in a mackintosh, who seemed to be drunk, led them on. When they reached the villa itself their leader asked to be allowed to speak alone with Tisza. The soldiers remained in the hall. Tisza received the stranger. He noticed that the man had a revolver, and, with a movement of his hand, showed him that he too had one in his pocket. The man was cowed by this and asked Tisza if he was not hiding a certain judge of a military tribunal who was his enemy and with whom he wanted to settle. Tisza answered that nobody was hiding in his house. At this the man and the soldiers left. Did they come to inspect the premises and get "the lie of the land" or did they come with the intention of killing him?

In several provincial towns it was reported at three o'clock in the afternoon, when Tisza was still alive, that he had been killed. In the suburbs too the rumour of his assassination spread early in the forenoon, and at about four o'clock, in the Otthon Literary Club, Paul Kéri, Károlyi's confidential man, was heard by several people to remark, after looking at his watch: "Tisza's life has an hour and a half more to run."

The policeman who had been sent there by the Wekerle government to guard Tisza were replaced by others before the 31st of October. The new men were restless, and their sergeant asked Tisza to obtain reinforcements. Tisza replied that as he had not asked for any guards it was not his business to ask for reinforcements. In the afternoon the sergeant came and said that he and his men were going to leave. It was impossible to telephone from the villa: the exchange answered but did not make the required connection. Everything seemed to be conspiring against him. The people in the house saw the police no more after this. They had not left, but they did not show themselves. Later on Tisza's brother-in-law and his nephew came and brought news of the upheaval in the town and said that the power had fallen into the hands of Michael Károlyi. Tisza wanted to go down to the Progressive Club and speak to his adherents, but his wife implored him not to go. So he sent his brother-in-law and asked his nephew to go with him.

Meanwhile it was getting dark, and the rabble in the street assumed a more and more threatening attitude. The gate of the garden was again being forced. No help could be expected from any quarter. The house was now besieged, and there was no way out . . .

Where were Tisza's friends and followers at this time? In the hour of his Golgotha there were but two women to share it with him. And history will not forget the names of those two women.

About five in the afternoon the shooting in the street became louder. The house-bell rang. The valet ran in and said that eight armed soldiers were in the house. Meanwhile two soldiers went down to the policemen and disarmed them in the name of the National Council. They made no resistance: eight men submitted to two. All this time the valet with tears in his eyes was imploring his master to escape by the window. Tisza put his hand on the man's shoulder: "I thank you for your faithful services. God bless you!" Then the three were left alone for a short time, he and the two women. "I will not run away; I will die just as I have lived," said Tisza. He took a revolver and went out into the hall. His wife and Denise Almássy went with him. Soldiers with raised arms were waiting for him, cigarettes in their mouths.

"What do you want?" Tisza asked.

"We want Count Stephen Tisza."

"I am he."

The soldiers shouted at him to put his revolver down. Tisza had said several times during the day that he would defend himself if it could do any good. But now he put down his revolver. This showed that he considered the situation hopeless. Yet he never winced for an instant. All his life he had been strong and brave, and now he was true to himself. He did not ask for his life but faced death boldly. One of the soldiers began a harangue, telling Tisza that he was the cause of the war and must pay for it. This soldier had carefully manicured nails . . . Another said that he had been a soldier for eight years and that Tisza was to blame for it. Tisza answered: "I did not want the war." At this moment a clock struck somewhere in the dark. One of the soldiers exclaimed: "Your last hour has struck." Then the cigarette-smoking assassins fired a volley. One bullet struck Tisza in the chest, and he fell forward. Denise Almássy was wounded too and collapsed. Tisza was lying on the floor when they fired again into him. Then they left.

In the dim light of the hall, filled with the smoke of gunpowder, the dying Tisza lay on the floor, and the powerful hand which had once governed a kingdom waved in its last movement tenderly towards those whom he loved: "Do not cry . . . It had to be!"

So he died as he had lived. His sublime fate had been accomplished. Life and death had produced a greater scene than the genius of the Greek writers of tragedies could accomplish. The fate of a whole nation is reflected in the bitter bloody fate of one of her sons. Tisza fell like an oak—and in his fall tore up the soil in which his life was rooted. While he stood, nobody knew how tall he was. Like a tree in the wilderness, it was possible only to measure him when he had fallen.

Stephen Tisza died in the same hour as Hungary. Those who murdered him will die in the hour of Hungary's resurrection.

. . . .

November 7th.

I was due to go on duty at the railway station this morning. I started from home in the dark. Rain was falling. Under the occasional lamps the murky neglected asphalt was like the rough skinned hide of some giant animal. The house-doors were still closed, and in front of the sleeping buildings the garbage stood in boxes and baskets on the edge of the pavement. Here and there in the dim light of the streets an early-riser passed.

The trams were filled with workmen. Sitting opposite me two evil-intentioned eyes glared at me out of a heavy coarse face. They were looking at the crown over the red cross on my coat.

"Don't wear that, there is no more crown."

"There is for me, and I worked under that sign during the whole war." The man grumbled, but said no more to me. Later, I was told that for wearing this emblem of charity a lady was hit in the face in the street.

At the station there was dense, frightful disorder. With a loud echo crowded trains rolled under the glass roof. The carriages were like ruins and their walls were riddled with bullet holes, for out on the open track bands of robbers shoot at the trains. The windows were smashed and the steps were falling off. Men were standing, shivering with cold, on the roofs, the steps, and even on the buffers of the

"ON THE ROOFS OF THE INCOMING TRAINS."

in-coming trains. The noise was appalling. Thousands of returning soldiers fought their way in wild disorder.

On the concrete floor of the platform, ankle-deep in mud, the splashing of innumerable shortened steps made a sickly noise. Russian prisoners, Serbians, Roumanians, stormed the waggons before they were quite empty. Home . . . Home . . .

They pushed each other, swore. They climbed in by the windows because there was no more room by the doors. A man employed at the station told me that during the war the daily number of passengers had been about thirty thousand. Now two hundred thousand come and go in a day. Trains able to carry 1500 passengers now carry 9000. Travelling is deadly dangerous : the axles cannot bear the excessive loads, and out of the desperate chaos there comes occasionally the news of some awful catastrophe. Hundreds of soldiers coming from the Italian front were swept off the roof at the entrance of tunnels. Corpses mark the road home.

Another train entered with shrill noise, bringing refugees and soldiers from the undefended frontiers. The refugees spread their news. Czech *komitadjis* mixed with regulars have invaded Upper Hungary. The Czechs have crossed the frontier in Trencsén and are marching on Pressburg. Wherever they pass they drive the Hungarian officials in front of them, and impose levies.

A woman from Nagy Becskerek lamented loudly, plaintively, like the whistling of the wind in the chimney.

" Dear, oh dear, the town is in the hands of the Serbians. In Ujvidék they are looting. They cross the frontier and nobody resists them. Only the German soldiers are pulling up the rails. And the Roumanians! . . . The Roumanians! . . .

A Székler woman sobs desperately.

" And the government has forbidden any armed resistance. Why, in the name of goodness, why? . . How can one understand it? For a Galician trench, for a rock on the Carso thousands and thousands of Hungarians have died. Yet nobody defends our own soil! Wherever it has been attempted threatening orders have been sent from Budapest."

The government has given orders that no resistance is to be offered to the foreign troops, so the authorities have to content themselves with protesting and let the inhabitants remain quietly in their homes. No opposition whatever to the troops of occupation! . . . And if this order is disregarded anywhere, detachments of sailors are sent from Budapest—escaped convicts and robbers, who arrest the organisers of patriotic resistance. Agitators creep among the people arming for resistance, Jews from Pest who incite to pillage. The people, stupid and misguided, crowd round them. Then things move quickly: they are told that peace has come and that everything is theirs. The crowd goes mad. It cares no more for country, for the enemy. There is no more resistance and all their anger is directed against the authorities and the landlords. The rabble start pillaging. There is general disorder and in the upheaval somebody turns up who, on pretence of restoring order, calls in the army. A foreign armed patrol enters: eighteen men who stick up their flag and beat down the Hungarian arms. And our folk just stare and look as if they were sleep-walking lunatics.

That is what they say, all of them, wherever they come from. One Hungarian town after the other falls into enemy hands. What we have held for a thousand years is lost in a single hour, and foreign occupations spread over Hungary's body like the spots of a plague. The names of towns and villages . . . A wild, desperate shout for help rises continually in me: "Is there nobody who can save us?"

The crowd of refugees rolled past me.

"They have pillaged our house! They have burnt down our cottage!" . . . Two men lifted a half-naked old man out of a cattle truck. His beautiful noble gray head wobbled as they carried him. His face looked like wax. Whence did they come? Nobody inquired. From everywhere, all round us! . . . And the refugees are being crammed into hotels, unheated emergency dwellings, cold school-rooms. At the stations mountains of luggage grow up on the platforms: huge piles, the remaining possessions of whole families; bundles tied up in tablecloths; washing-baskets; crammed perambulators; gladstone bags; fowl-houses; trunks and portmanteaux. And the pathetic piles grow and grow from hour to hour in wild disorder . . .

More Russians were coming from the entrance. Soldiers hustled the people with the butt-ends of their rifles. "Go on, Ruski!" A heavy animal stench drifted behind them. Desperate men struggled round the piles of trunks . . . A boy dragging an immense old leather bag . . . In front of a broken trunk an old lady kneels in the mud. She wears a sable coat and her head is covered with a peasant woman's neckerchief, just as she had managed to escape. She weeps loudly, wringing her delicate hands. All her possessions have been stolen on the way. Nobody heeds her. Children shriek and cannot tell whence they came. They want their mother, lost during the flight. In one carriage a little girl has been trampled to death in the throng. Soldiers carry her dead on a stretcher. From the other side across the rails, a woman comes running: she jumps wildly and her hair flutters madly in front of her eyes. She screams. She has not yet got there, she has seen nothing, but she knows; it was hers, it was hers . . .

Meanwhile Polish Jews, slinking along the walls, bargained . . . They pounced on the soldiers back from the front, and bought Italian money. At the exit armed sailors made a disturbance and took eggs and fat from the baskets of peasant women. Agitators with red ribbons round their arms, delegates of the Soldiers' Council, distributed revolutionary handbills; one of them made a speech. The soldiers surrounded him, some listened, some laughed, scratched their heads, and, as they went on, no longer saluted their superiors.

A train came in with a shrill cry, as if it were a refugee itself, panting and shabby after its long flight, and poured out more people. Wounded soldiers dragged themselves to the refreshment room. The foot of one was wrapped in a newspaper: the red guards at the Austrian frontier had taken his boots. More refugees. Once they had a home, they had a fireside . . . Now all is lost! Hunger stares imploringly out of their eyes and they reach for their crust of bread as if they were asking for alms.

What hast thou done, Károlyi?

I went home with a reeling head. Morning had extinguished the gas lamps a long while ago. I looked in the faces that passed me in the gray light of day. Are these refugees too? The town around me was shabby and dirty. Grimy flags flapped from the houses in the cold air. They were still there to proclaim their impudent lie—"the people's victory."

We have lost the war. Foreign troops invade Hungary, tens of thousands of refugees tramp the streets, and Budapest feasts her traitors and stands beflagged in the centre of the collapsing country.

CHAPTER VII

November 8th.

The wind chases the clouds above the Danube. It whistles down the chimneys. The streets of Buda shiver between the houses.

The tram to our hills was practically empty. Everybody has come to town and the houses stand abandoned. The strokes of axes resound in the woods, and trembling townspeople steal scraps of wood along the roadside. Shabby clerks, teachers, women pick up brushwood in the thickets. Now and then a shot is heard from the hills. Thousands of disbanded soldiers have taken their rifles with them and are shooting game freely all over the country. The woods are crowded with poachers. Blood-stains. A rotting carcase. Hungary's famous game is on the verge of extinction.

I reached our villa and walked round the abandoned house. It has not yet been broken into. The wind was twisting the dead leaves along the road into ropes. There was a dry rattle everywhere, and the branches of the bare trees knocked together in the moving air. An old woman walked down the road and her thin silken skirt fluttered in the wind. She must have known better days, and now she carried firewood on her back. There is no wood to be got in town. What will happen in winter? We shall freeze . . .

Coming back I bought a newspaper through the tram window. Many hands were stretched out. Opposite me a young ensign bought one too. The torn off insignia of his rank had left their mark on the collar of his uniform. Well disposed officers have ceased to wear uniforms. It has become a livery of shame, and is worn only by those who have nothing else to wear. This one looked like one of that category. Only deserters, civilians, and those who shirked the war now wear uniforms.

I began to read the midday paper. Belgrade . . . Everything around me disappeared. Through the printed letters of the paper I saw the Serbian town as I had known it long ago. The Danube was rolling past the wharf, there was the high fort, once Hunyadi's impregnable Hungarian stronghold, the Konak ; and between the trees beyond the town the small convent where, under the oil-painted planks of the floor, without any monument, the massacred bodies of the last Obrenovic and his mutilated Serbian queen, Draga, lie. Then I thought of the garden of Topcider and its oriental little Kiosk where Serbian Gypsies used to fiddle and sing. Officers, in brilliant uniforms after the Russian pattern, took their afternoon substitute for tea at small round tables, eating onions with bread. Some of them had the ribbon of an Order on their chest. A Serbian explained to me proudly that this Order was bestowed only on those who had taken an active part in the events that cleared the road to the throne for Peter Karageorgevic.

Herds of cattle were driven through the ill-paved streets. Manure, dirt, bugs, rubbish, and flies—big, shiny, blue flies. The Skupstina . . . When I saw that I could not help thinking of Hungary's house of Parliament. The two buildings proclaimed both the past and the culture of the two peoples. Ours is a Gothic blossom, with its roots in the Danube, the bed of which is the grave of our first conqueror, Attila, who received tribute from Rome and Byzantium, and sleeps there his sleep of fifteen hundred years. When I saw the Serbian Parliament it was a building like a stable, with wooden benches in it and the walls covered with red, white and blue stuff. Its air was reeking with the scent of onions and sheep, while the windows were obscured with fly marks.

Since I had been there this small Balkan town must have suffered much. The soldiers of Mackensen and

Kövess had passed victoriously over its ruins. Now Károlyi and Jászi, with the delegates of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council, go there a-begging.

Why did they go there? Why just there? The jerking of the wheels of the tram seemed to repeat rhythmically "Why just there, why just there . . ."

According to the official news the French general was haughty and ruthless. He took Károlyi's memorandum, turned his back on him, and banged the door. . .

This memorandum reveals the unsavoury truth when it complains that within twenty-four hours after assuming power Károlyi had promised to the Allies to lay down arms at once, but his offer had been prevented by the common High Command from reaching its destination. The High Command had isolated Hungary from the Allied powers, and had cut the telephone wires. It had charged General Weber to negotiate in the name of the old Monarchy with General Diaz, the Italian Commander-in-Chief. Károlyi's memorandum protested against this because " nobody but the delegates of the Hungarian people are entitled to negotiate for independent Hungary. This is the reason for our appearance," ended this disgraceful document.

So it was nobody who called for them, nobody who sent these people who claim to be the representatives of the Hungarian people. Károlyi the gambler gambles in Belgrade. He plays an iniquitous game. He cheats for his own pocket while his own country loses.

The newspaper was executing a wild dance in my hands while I read the memorandum. Surely men have never written anything like this about their own country. They go to ask for an armistice and accuse us before our enemies. " We oppressed the nationalities, we were tyrants . . ." I felt as if something had been poured down my throat which it was impossible to swallow. I choked for a time, and my blood was beating a mad tattoo at the sides of my head. He who wrote that lied in hatred, while those who transmitted it were cretins or criminals.

In his answer to the memorandum the French general was insulting and contemptuous. The shame of it all! They are slighted and we bear the disgrace.

Every word of Franchet d'Esperay was a slap in the face to Károlyi and his fellows. What unfathomable contempt must have been felt by this old Norman nobleman, this patriotic soldier, for Károlyi and his Bolshevick Internationalist companions!

Workers' Council . . . Soldiers' Council . . .

He looked sternly at the Semitic features of Jászi and the faun-like face of Hatvany as he said:

" You only represent the Hungarian race and not the Hungarian people."

Then he answered the clumsy, cunning sentence of the memorandum, sprung from the brain of some journalistic fantast: " From the first of November Hungary ceases to be a belligerent and becomes a neutral country."

" The Hungarians have fought side by side with the Germans and with the Germans they will suffer and pay."

An answer to those who shouted in Parliament over dying Hungary " we are friends of the Entente," an answer to Károlyi, who in the interest of his personal ascendency intrigued with Prague, Bukarest and Belgrade.

" The Czechs, Slovakians, Roumanians and Yugo-Slavs are the enemies of Hungary, and I have only to give the order and you will be destroyed."

I forced my eyes to overcome my shame and anger, and read on.

Followed the conditions of the armistice. . . Not conditions, but orders born of revenge and hatred dictated by the commander of an armed force to the self-appointed, obtruding envoys of a disarmed people.

Horrible nightmare . . . The Hungarian government has to evacuate huge territories in the east and in the south. Hungarian soil must be delivered over to the Balkan forces. We must surrender from the Szamos to the Maros-Tisza line, from the Danube to the Sloveno-Croatian frontier, that which has been ours for a thousand years.

Eighteen points . . . Eighteen blows in the face of the nation. After this Hungary is a country no longer, she is a surrounded quarry thrown to the fury of the pack. The Kill . . .

Poor country of mine, poor countrymen . . .

Suddenly I saw the letters no more: something had covered them, as the stones at the bottom of a brook are rendered indistinct by the waves above. I wiped my eyes and looked up. Had others read it too? The little ensign had. He was weeping silently. He sat there with his head bowed, crushing the newspaper in his fist. I looked round. Faces had changed since I had read the paper. The others had read it too. Strangers began to talk to each other excitedly:—"I always told you so, Károlyi alone could bring us a good peace. He got it in two days. It was said that he alone could save us . . ."

For an instant the misguided people seemed to have regained their consciences. Terrified disappointment, bitter complaints filled the car. Most of them cursed the French general furiously, and remarks of a new kind were heard about Károlyi too. Something had become clear . . . Or did I only see my own views in the eyes of the others?

"It isn't all that," said a gentleman to his neighbour; "we must not judge hastily." And he read aloud that the delegates of the government had made the signing of the armistice conditional. These conditions were set out in a dispatch which was forwarded through Franchet d'Esperay to Paris. "It is clear," the gentleman said, "that the government will only sign the armistice if the Entente powers guarantee the old frontiers of Hungary till the conclusion of peace. Károlyi will manage the peace treaty all right. His confidential friends say that he can carry everything before him in Paris. He will get peace in six weeks."

The exhausted people clung to these words. The protesting telegram had destroyed the finality of the catastrophe . . . And those who a few minutes ago had spoken desperately, sent their tired souls to sleep with self-deceiving optimism. They became quiet. They crowded together and looked out of the window. A woman yawned aloud. Behind my back they talked of the high prices: potatoes had gone up again . . .

When I came home my mother was sitting in the little green room near the window. She sat passively in the twilight, she who was always busy with something. When the door opened she turned towards me and raised her head slightly to be kissed. I saw in the twilight her kind blue eyes, which, in spite of years, had retained their youth and lustre. They now looked at me in indescribable grief. A newspaper lay on the table.

"Have you read it?" I asked.

"I have . . ."

. . . .

November 9th

Huge white posters have appeared on the walls. All along the streets everything is covered with them. They are posted on the shop windows, on the windows of the coffee-houses. They appear between the announcements of the kinematographs in the advertisement columns. Not orders, not regulations, not proclamations: from far away I could see it, one word at the top of them all: A BALLAD.

It is an old, sweet word, one which seems to come from olden days bringing a message to the new: a ballad . . . I scanned one of the posters, but was unable to decipher the smaller words. I had to cross the road. While doing so I pondered: will this ballad contain that which we are waiting for, the cry of Hungary's agony? The rebelling voice of our sufferings? Is it an old ballad, or one of the later ones? Or is it by some misled poet who has helped to burn his ancestor's soil and had aided the band of Jews to make the revolution? Has the erring soul returned to the fold of his race and does he give voice to the tortures of the betrayed Hungarian land into which Balkan robbers are already setting their teeth? Or is it by one who could shape into our language the sufferings of homeless Dante, who could put into verse the moaning of the dread storm that rages over the Great Plain?

Not they, it is not Hungarians who speak. The sickly verses of one Renée Erdös polluted the air, plastered up by the government all over the town.

> "And he went to Belgrade, good Michael Karolyi
> . . . . sad Michael Karolyi . .
> . . . . great Michael Karolyi."

And this was stuck up on every house in Budapest. What a childish game! The ballad is meant to create sympathy for Michael Károlyi, so that anger against him shall not rise in people's hearts; it attempts to transfer to him the pity that the nation should feel for itself. And as though by a word of command, the whole press of Budapest is writing in the same strain. The newspapers practically hide the conditions of the armistice and enlarge on the rude contempt of the French general. In their columns Károlyi has became a martyr who has suffered for the nation.

The people in the street stopped and read the ballad, and now and then somebody said: "Poor Michael Károlyi!" But even while this was being said bitter news spread over the town, news which none could stop. The truth about the Belgrade meeting has filtered through, and already people are clenching their fists.

Franchet d'Esperay had come to the meeting in an aeroplane from Salonika. He stationed a guard of honour in front of his hotel. He wore full dress uniform, with all his decorations, and thus received those whom he believed to be the envoys of Hungary. Michael Károlyi and his friends appeared in shooting-jackets, breeches, gaiters: as if they were out for a holiday. The general glared in astonishment at the motley company. He became cold and contemptuous, shook hands with nobody, and folded his arms over his chest. Astonished at first, he became ironical as he listened to Karolyi's faulty speech. After taking possession of the accusing memorandum (which had been edited by Jászi) he ranged the company within the light of his lamp and looked attentively at one after the other.

"*Vous êtes Juif?*" he asked Hatvany; then looking at Jászi and Károlyi, he said, "You are Jews, too?"

His face showed undisguised disgust when Károlyi introduced to him, as an achievement of the revolution, the delegates of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council. He pointed at the collar of Csernyák, the delegate of the Soldiers' Council, whence the insignia of rank had been removed: "*Vous êtes tombés si bas?*" Then, instead of bowing, he threw his head back haughtily, turned on his heel, and left them. He dined with his officers, and did not invite the delegation, though the table had been laid for them.

The self-delegated men looked at each other in dismay. How were they to report this to the befooled, betrayed country, which had been rocked to sleep for months by the recital of Károlyi's connections with the Allies, and the belief of a good peace? . . . In their fear they accused each other, and one of them said to Károlyi: "In Budapest you were feasted like a demi-god, and here you are treated like a dog . . ."

Károlyi and his friends went without dinner that day in Belgrade, and after his dinner General Franchet d'Esperay put on his field uniform and with hard words handed the delegation the terrible, degrading conditions of the armistice.

This happened in Belgrade on the 7th of November. One day later, yesterday evening, the members of the government went solemnly to the railway station to accord a triumphant welcome to the delegation. Countess Károlyi, Mrs. Jászi and other "revolutionary ladies" (as they like to be styled) were there too. But the festal crowd waited in vain. Károlyi and his following dared not face them . . . They had stopped the special train at a little side-station, got out quietly, and dispersed in the ill-lit streets.

It was through a back-door that they brought their shame from Belgrade into the betrayed town.

. . . .

November 10th.

A leaden gray rain is falling. From the wall of the old neglected house opposite a big piece of plaster is washed off and falls with a splash into the street, where pieces of it fly in all directions. It is Sunday. Nobody passes along the street. Only the rain drives before the window. It comes and goes again, and writes something on the panes.

The republican party has called a mass meeting for this afternoon. Organised labour and organising good-for-nothings, the Soldiers' Council, the officers, the non-commissioned officers . . . meetings everywhere. And everywhere discourses on the supremacy of the people, its rights, democracy, independence and freedom. But no mention is made of Belgrade. There is no protest meeting or demonstration against the conditions of the armistice. With its cunning lies the faithful, servile press of Károlyi has hoodwinked the crowd again. The town hides the shame of Belgrade in silence, as if it were not its concern, as if it had lost all self-respect. The crowd, stupid and good-tempered, continues on the road which it trod yesterday. Blind flocks of sheep and herds of blinkered oxen, thoughtless and sightless masses, following their degraded leader towards the precipice. They are going, and why does he delay who is to bring salvation?

The rain writes ghostly characters on my window as well as on the panes of the house opposite. That is all; nothing else happens.

Nothing? I must be mad to write such a thing. Does not every day bring with it the collapse of something which had always existed, ever since I was born, and before that, long before that? . . . It is incomprehensible. One reads only the news, and when one has read that it seems impossible, and one half expects somebody will laugh, or a voice will tell us that it is not true and that everything is really as it used to be. Yet we wait in vain . . . And again we believe that nothing will happen.

Meanwhile loyal Bavaria has driven King Louis out of the country. The Soldiers' and Workers' Council in Saxony has made a proclamation to the people: "The King has been deprived of his throne, the Wettin dynasty has ceased to exist." Baden has expelled its ruler, and the Grand Duke of Hesse is a prisoner of the mob. Wurtemburg, Brunswick, Weimar . . . Ancient thrones, legendary old courts, centres of culture, art-loving little residences, all collapse in a few minutes. It is as if some giant Hatred roams abroad, demolishing everything it finds standing, from east to west.

All the faithful German princes have lost their thrones. The only one who still wears a crown is the one who has shown himself faithless—the Hohenzollern down there in Roumania. And the Kaiser has fled to Holland from his unhappy Empire.

Kaiser Wilhelm has resigned his throne! As the news spreads this fresh token of the mutability of human affairs causes a shudder even in those who worked for it with hatred and received it with shouts of triumph.

Since Napoleon, nobody has been so violently hated on this globe as he. Doubtless this will be the measure of his importance in history. It will judge his power by the fact that against Napoleon England had allied only a fraction of Europe, while against the Hohenzollern the whole world was forced to rise in arms.

The cause of the two Emperors' downfall is the same. Napoleon wanted to make France the first power of the world, and Kaiser Wilhelm dreamt the same dream for the German Empire. Neither of them could stop half-way.

Is it a Saint Helena that fate has in store for Kaiser Wilhelm? Will the Dutch castle that has received him turn out to be a replica of the *Bellerophon?*

The Kaiser was a friend of the Hungarians. Once in the royal castle of Buda he proposed the health of the Hungarian nation. Since the rule of the Hapsburgs no crowned head has ever spoken to us like that. His speech was printed in school books, the children learned it by heart, and the memory of the Kaiser stayed with us. But he never came again to our midst. During the war he went to Vienna, to Sophia and to Constantinople. He never stopped at Budapest. And while the Hungarian people waited for him whose soldiers had bled with ours at three gates of our country, he was forced to bear in mind the jealousy of Vienna. His picture was in the shop-windows, Budapest had named its finest boulevard after him, the colours of his Empire floated everywhere and if his train touched the country's soil the newspapers wrote in his homage.

In 1916 Tisza went to the German General Headquarters. The Roumanians had just invaded Transylvania and he asked for troops and help for his hard-pressed country.

" Will the Hungarians be grateful for it?" asked the Kaiser.

" We shall be grateful," answered Stephen Tisza.

They have torn the contract of our alliance, but a common misfortune can write a more permanent alliance than any human hand. Marshal Foch's document stating the conditions of the armistice with Germany is the twin of the ruthless writing of Belgrade. Wilson's mask has fallen and the victors beggar us and let loose upon us the blood-stained cloud which comes from the East to cover the despair of betrayed peoples.

On this cloud obscure strangers steal over the Russian border into the heart of Europe and join with those whose features resemble theirs. And there are such in Paris, in London, and in New York too . . . They have invaded the greater half of Europe. In Russia Trotski-Bronstein, Krassin-Goldgelb, Litvinoff-Finkelstein, Radek and Joffe are all-powerful. In Munich Kurt Eisner is the master and president of the Republic. In Berlin Beerfeld is at the head of the Soldiers' Council and Hirsch at the Workmens'. In Vienna the power is in the hands of Renner, Adler, Deutsch and Bauer. And in Budapest . . .

Is this all accidental?

Carrion-crows on dying nations . . . They hack out the eyes that still see, they pierce the still throbbing hearts with their beaks, tear shreds of flesh from the convulsed members. And nowhere does anyone appear to drive them away.

Nothing happens . . . Silently, silently, like speechless despair, the rain beats at my window.

. . . .

November 11th.

I might have known that it would end like this!

Károlyi and his government decided yesterday afternoon that they would accept the Belgrade conditions without alterations . . . The French Premier did not even deign to answer their protesting telegrams. He looked over their heads and would not speak to them. Instead he sent direct instructions to Franchet d'Esperay: "I request you to treat with Count Károlyi military questions only, to the exclusion of all other matters. This is final. Clemenceau."

In the old palace of the Prime Minister, up there in the castle of Buda, the cabinet met in council.

At first Károlyi was greatly excited, then, tired of listening to the others, he stretched his long legs, plunged his hands into his pockets, and with his head bowed on his chest stared into a corner where nothing was going on. The ministers of his party were nervous. The socialist and radical ministers were cool. Linder is a minister no more. He was perpetually drunk. Brandy bottles stood on his ministerial writing-table and in his ante-room sailors were constantly drinking. The government has relieved him and put Lieutenant Colonel Bartha into his place. But " to make sure of Linder's valuable services for the future " he was invited to go to Belgrade and sign the conditions of the armistice in the name of the Hungarian authorities . . .

It all looks as if it were a systematical, devilish conspiracy. Apparently they want to degrade us as much as possible so as to make it easier for them to tread on us. After the delegation in shooting jackets, a dipsomaniac lieutenant goes to Belgrade, and with his watery eyes and alcoholic breath represents Hungary before the haughty French General.

And while Linder was preparing for his journey, Károlyi made a speech at the National Council, meant to encourage and reassure those who wanted to rob Hungarian territory.

The Serbian troops have crossed the frontier and are advancing rapidly into the country. On their national holiday the Czechs have decided to occupy all counties to the possession of which they aspire. The Czech troops have started and are fast overrunning the country . . . Their plan is to occupy Pressburg and Upper Hungary. This means seventeen to nineteen counties. The situation on the Roumanian side is serious too. Roumania has decided to order a general mobilisation . . . " In the full knowledge of our physical inability and of the right of our cause," Károlyi finally declared, " we can only rely on justice. Consequently I propose that we sign the treaty of armistice with General Franchet d'Esperay, *and when we have signed it, every invasion becomes simply an act of violence. Whoever invades us, we shall protest, raise our warning voice, and appeal to the judgment of the civilised world; but we shall offer no armed opposi-*

tion, because we want, and are going to stand by, the conditions of the armistice."

The so-called Prime Minister of Hungary, from the very heart of Hungary, promises to our little neighbours, when they start on their plundering expeditions, that if they come they shall not be interfered with, that they will meet no armed opposition. And so Michael Károlyi, in the hearing of the National Council and of the united Cabinet, calls in the Serbians, Roumanians and Czechs.

With trembling lips I read the words of this shameful speech. What does Michael Károlyi get for this infamous job? . . . It is but two hundred years since his ancestor Alexander Károlyi received from the Emperor of Austria the domains of Erdöd, Huszt, Tarcalt and Marosvásárhely, at the valuation of fifty thousand pieces of gold, and the crown of a count (on to which the herald painter at Vienna painted by mistake two more pearls than the other Hungarian counts wear) for his betrayal of Rákoczi, the Hungarian champion. The crown of the Counts Károlyi has eleven pearls. Was it for those two pearls that the democratic Károlyi was haughtier than any man of his rank? He wore them and wears them to this day, when he is making a republic. He wears the rank bestowed on him by the Hapsburgs, while he deprives the Hapsburgs of theirs. He insists on being called the Right Honourable Count, and that his wife be called the Right Honourable Countess, while those who are the source of his title are called in his press Charles Hapsburg and Joseph Hapsburg! He uses the King's special train, his motor-car, and at the opera sits with his wife in the royal box. He intends to occupy the royal castle too. One day after dinner, in the intimacy of his family, smoking his cigar, he said casually: "I'll make the King resign." But his two advisers, Kéri and Jászi, advised him that this should not be done by him or by the government. The Hungarian educated classes were attached to the crown and the peasantry was loyal to the King.

I met an old acquaintance this afternoon. It was he who reported to me this opinion of Károlyi's Councillors. It was told to him by quite reliable people. Paul Kéri said: "One never knows. Let the odium of it be attached to someone else. We had the German Alliance broken by some outsider; let us get the resignation of the King effected by other people. The most suitable people would be the magnates. If it suits the people, it is a good card in our hand that even the counts don't want the King. If they don't like it, let the nobility pay for it . . ."

"They won't find anybody to do it," I said, as we walked side by side through the crowded street.

"You may be right," my companion replied, shrugging his lean shoulders. "I hear that Károlyi's negotiations have all failed. And yet, the matter becomes urgent for him. They want to hurry here too. They envy the priority of Berlin and Vienna. Do you know that when the news of the German events reached the Austrian National Council, it at once decided for the republic, and the Emperor Charles yesterday signed his resignation in Schönbrunn?"

"No . . . I did not know . . ."

"Under the influence of this event Károlyi's government admitted that it did not intend to wait for the constitutional assembly to decide on the form the Constitution should take. 'Companion' Bokányi abolished Kingship on the day of the revolution . . . He does not want it, nor does Kunfi, nor Pogány. Baron Hatvany, Jászi and Paul Kéri are all against it; in short, Kingship has to go . . . They made Károlyi sign a declaration for form's sake, but that does not count. But if it interests you, let us go to the editorial office of the *Pesti Naplo* where we can read all about it."

In the lighted window, among the latest news, there it was, the text of the proclamation: "The Hungarian National Council has addressed a solemn request to the National Councils formed in the various towns and communes, that they should decide at once whether they agree with the decision of the Hungarian National Council that the future form of the Hungarian state be that of a Republic. A rapid decision and immediate answer are requested."

I felt the same inexpressible disgust that I always feel when I read the writings of the new power. "An immediate answer is requested . . ." as if an agent were asking for orders . . . "a rapid decision" . . as if it were an auction of somebody's old clothes: the crown of St. Stephen and the traditions of a thousand Hungarian years.

"Don't let it annoy you," my companion said bitterly; "it is only a comedy. It makes no difference what they write, and it's just the same whatever the country answers. The secretariat of the Social Democratic party and the other 'companions' have already settled the question. On November the 16th they are going to proclaim the republic, and Károlyi is to be President. And we shall say nothing and do nothing."

"And how long are we going to do nothing?"

"What can one do? I was at the front for forty-four months. I was wounded three times. I'm ill and I'm tired. And in other places it's even worse than here. In Berlin they are shooting in the streets. Officers, loyal to the Kaiser, and the Red Guards cut each other's throats in Unter den Linden. Machine-guns fire from the roofs of the houses. Red sailors have occupied the imperial palace, and corpses lie between the barricades. Here, they rarely knock a man down, and they only take his watch once." He laughed painfully. "You know I was buried by a shell in my trench. They had to dig for some time before they found me, and the earth was heavy. Since then . . ." Horror showed in his eyes and he shivered. "It's no good struggling. We can't get out. It was all in vain."

He turned his head away, and we went on side by side for some time without a word; then he saluted clumsily and turned down a dark little street. But although he had gone his voice remained with me, and as I went on I could hear it over and over again; it came towards me, followed me, kept pace with me: "It's no good struggling . . . we can't get out . . . it was all in vain . . ." Those who suffer, those who are cold and hungry, those who are beggars and cripples, those who had their orders torn from their chests and the stars from the collars of their uniforms, all think alike. Those who did the tearing had not seen the war, had stayed at home, had lived in plenty and got rich; their numbers increased while ours grew less; they won the war that we lost.

"We are done for, it's no good struggling." Is that what I see written in people's eyes? Exhaustion and the endless "I'm ill and tired?" . . . Now I understand. The best have fallen, and those who have come back are wounded, though there be no wound on their bodies. Neither generals nor statesmen can remedy this.

I went home. The staircase was in darkness, the electric light had gone wrong a few days ago and no workman could be found to repair it; all had joined the unemployed's bargaining federation. The front door bell was out of order too. The electrician who always kept it in order had been deserted by his men and had to attend to his shop himself.

One has to knock at one's own door nowadays, for it cannot be left unbolted. Loafing soldiers pay visits to houses. One hears of nothing but burglaries.

As I went upstairs impressions of the streets of the decaying town passed through my mind: the furious struggling crowd of crammed electric trams; the 'new rich' in fur coats; dirty flags, the remains of last month's posters on grimy walls; coffee-houses with music within, crude noises and lewd conversations; people loafing in front of coal merchants' cellars. The horror of the foul streets was still with me when I reached my room.

My mother called to me. She was sitting in her room with a shaded lamp on the table, and on the green velvet table-cloth the kings and queens of a pack of little patience cards promenaded as if in a field.

"Where have you been?" my mother asked.

"I went to see about the coal."

"Well?"

I did not want to tell her my visit had been in vain. "I shall have to go again. I couldn't settle matters to-day." I thought of our empty cellar and of the coal-office, the long queue of waiting people. Scenes passed before me like the pictures of a kinematograph . . . The window of the *Pesti Naplo*. People were waiting there too . . . Big letters, latest news . . . Czechs, Roumanians, Serbs, and the names of ancient Hungarian towns . . . People said nothing and craned their necks to see . . .

Everywhere the same tired faces . . . And as if one voice were speaking for them all: "It is no good struggling . . . we can't get out . . . it was all in vain" . . . Yes, it is past the remedy of generals and statesmen . . .

All the time my mother was looking at me thoughtfully over her patience cards. She said nothing, asked no questions, but leant forward and stroked my head. It was unlike her: her tenderness was hardly ever visible or heard. It was always there, but quietly, underneath. She rarely showed her feelings, and lived behind a veil of self-control. In my childhood it was only when I was ill or downhearted that she showed her true self, for my sake, not for hers. But lately, now that events had caused old age to quicken his steps, the veil had been more often drawn aside. I wanted so much to say something, to thank her for what was beyond thanks. She stroked my hair . . . How soothing it was! Her hand knew a sweet, tender secret which it revealed only on the brows of her children when they bent under the weight of sorrow. Dear loving hands! They can accomplish what neither generals nor statesmen can.

Something I cannot express in words rose within me in that moment. Was it a foreboding, was it the clue that we were all seeking, was it a presentiment of something I was to do? I cannot answer, but it was something that should throw itself before the torrent of destruction, should raise a dam before the motherland and its women, the faithful, the prolific, the holders of Hungary's future . . . To protect those who see things with eyes different from those of generals and statesmen.

A carriage stopped in front of the house. Who could it be? For days I had seen practically nobody. Social intercourse had almost ceased; one did not even know what was happening to one's best friends or where they were. Everyone took refuge in his own home, and the threads that had been broken in October had not yet been retied. A knock at the door, the hinges creaked. Steps in the corridor. It was my friend Countess Raphael Zichy.

"Do you remember the last time we met? Up in the woods in a fog? And while we were trying to guess what the future had in store for us the rebellion had already started in the town."

"Then it must have been about the 30th of October."

"Since then everything has collapsed. Is there any force on earth that could repair the havoc?"

"Nothing ever can be repaired," said my visitor, pensively. "The evil always remains; but one can raise something good by its side that will progress and leave the evil behind it."

"But is there anybody who can do this? We're not organised, and everybody is so despondent and tired. As long as this is so, nothing will ever happen. It is this that has got to be cured first. I was thinking about it just before you came: in defeat women are always greater than men. If they could only be roused and set going they might restore the faith that everybody seems to have lost."

"I'm already negotiating with the various Catholic women's institutions," the Countess said, "and I hope to bring about their unity."

"I don't want the unity of creeds," said I; "I want the unity of Hungarians. The forces of Destruction have united in one camp. All its apostles work together. Why shouldn't the forces of Regeneration unite as well?"

"I'm going to begin where I'm rooted," answered my guest with an enigmatic smile, while taking leave. "You're like all Hungarians. You want to do everything at once and carry everything before you . . ."

She was right. She had started to work in the right way.

CHAPTER VIII

November 12th.

What has happened?

In front of one of the big schools sailors were lined up in a row. A company, armed to the teeth, stood in the middle of the road. People looked at each other curiously, anxiously. This school had an evil past. In October the deserters had gathered together here, the armed servants of the Károlyi revolution. It is said that Tisza's murderers started from this point.

"What are they up to now?"

"They're Ladislaus Fényes's sailors. They're going to Pressburg against the Czechs," a lean, fair man said.

Somebody sighed "Poor people of Pressburg!" The fair man made a frightened sign to him to keep quiet. Behind his back an officer began to talk excitedly. I could only hear half of what he said, but it was something to the effect that in one of the barracks three thousand soldiers and five hundred officers who were going to the defence of Upper Hungary had been disarmed by the orders of Pogány.

A broad, dark Jew, rigged out in field uniform, now came out of the school building, a ribbon of national colours on his chest. His voice did not reach me. I only saw his mouth move. He addressed the sailors, and cheers rang through the street. The crowd rushed forward and I turned back to escape it, tried to reach home by a circuitous route. Suddenly I heard more cheering, and behind me the roadway resounded with heavy steps. The detachment of sailors was marching to the railway station, the mob accompanying it. The detachment was headed by the dark Jew, with drawn sword, and behind him marched a criminal looking rabble dressed in sailors' uniforms. Most of them wore red ribbons in their caps, and the deeply cut blouses displayed their bare, hairy chests. The last sailor was a squashed nosed, sturdy man, his dirty pimpled face shone. Round his bare neck he wore a red handkerchief. As he walked along he caught his foot in something and looked back. Between his strong, bushy eyebrows and protruding cheekbones his eyes were set deep. I shuddered. This riff-raff going to the defence of Pressburg! Are such as they to recover Upper Hungary?

Then I remembered. The man at the head of the sailors must have been Victor Heltai-Hoffer, who on the 31st of October, from the Hotel Astoria, was nominated Commander of Budapest's garrison. I was told that he had been a contractor, but people from Károlyi's entourage affirmed that he had been a waiter in a music-hall of ill-fame. Later he became a professional dancer, and during the war he lived by illicit trade, dabbling in hay, fat and sugar. Those who were his accomplices are not likely to be mistaken . . . On the day of the revolution Heltai offered to storm the Garrison's command with a band of deserters. This disgraceful success was followed by his nomination to the post of commander by Fényes, Kéri, and the other National councillors. A few days ago queer news was circulated about him, and he was suspended from his position. Heltai is said to be in possession of certain disgraceful secrets concerning those in power, and it was possible that he was put in command of the Pressburg relief force in order to get rid of him.

The noise of the sailors' steps was lost in the hubbub of the street. Carriages passed with their miserable lean horses, people went to and fro with spiritless monotony. Although the sailors had long disappeared I still seemed to see the last, with his squashed nose, his red tie. That criminal face wore the expression of the whole contingent.

And that horrible face under a cap worn on one side of the head is everywhere in a country that putrifies. It appears in the light of the burning

HELTAI'S SAILORS.

(To face p. 120.)

houses, it enters at night into lonely manors, into cottages, it rushes in under the portals of palaces, goes through the rooms, searches, spies, and there is no escape from it. Whoever it pursues, it will catch . . . Then it wipes its bloody hands on silk or linen, and when its heavy step has passed, death grins in the dark, pillaged room behind it.

Once upon a time the word "sailor" brought to our minds the image of the great, free expanse of oceans and shores. Now we hold our breath at its sound, and shudder in horror.

That face with the sailor's cap worn rakishly on one side, that face with the deep, loot-seeking eyes . . . There it was in Moscow when thousands of Imperial officers were slaughtered between the walls of the Kremlin. It was in Petrograd in the hour of starkest horror, in Odessa, in Altona; and in Helsingfors it bathed itself in the blood of Finns. It is now in Berlin, in the Imperial castle on which the red flag floats. And it was lurking in the courtyard of Schönbrunn Castle when the Emperor Charles was driven from his home.

I can see the large staircase of Schönbrunn by which the Emperor, the Empress and their little fair children left their home, walking down alone, expelled. In olden days a hundred footmen jumped at a sign of their hand; courtiers bowed to the ground before them. Now, wherever they looked, there was not one faithful eye for them; whoever they might call, he would not come.

When Francis Joseph was dying on his little iron camp-bed, in a room at Schönbrunn, the heir to the crown and the Archduchess Zita wrung their hands in their despair. "Good God, not yet, not yet" . . . Then the door of the old ruler's room was opened: it had become a mortuary, and they two walked slowly down the great gallery. The Court bowed low before them. And they walked weeping, holding each other's hands. Since then they have been always walking, through many mistakes, disappointments, and tears, and now they have reached the bottom of the staircase.

The little Crown Prince, as he had been taught, saluted all the time with his baby hands. "They won't acknowledge it to-day, mother," he said sadly.

The red-cockaded peoples' guards who occupied the place turned aside.

The King, in civilian clothes, with bowed head, stepped out into the open. The sound of his steps died away in the big, empty house, and the darkness of the evening swallowed up the garden, under whose straight-cut hedges, peopled with statues of gods and goddesses, the Hapsburgs had passed so many lovely summers.

When the royal motor-cars passed through the court of honour the usual bugle-call did not resound; the guard did not turn out, and red flags rose above the roofs of the houses of Schönbrunn. Over the gate the double-headed eagle was covered with red rags; though it had been predatory and had cruelly clawed peoples and countries, it had never returned from its flight without bringing treasures for Vienna. And it may be the greatest tragedy of the Hapsburgs that their unduly favoured capital turned indifferently away from them when the scum of the red power had driven them from home.

The rapidly speeding car took the unfortunate prince to Eckhardsau, and henceforth he lived under the protection of the National Council of the Renners and Bauers. Who knows for how long? Who knows what is in store for him?

. . . .

November 13th.

Every day has its news, and the news has eagle's claws that tear the living flesh.

Behind the retreating Mackensen, Roumanians pour through the Transylvanian passes. The Serbians have occupied the Banat and the Bácska. Temesvár and Zombor are in their hands. The Czechs are advancing towards Kassa and, after having robbed our land, they even want to rob the country of its coat of arms. They have stolen our three hills surmounted by a double cross and have assigned it as arms to Upper Hungary, which they have named Slovensko.

To-day Linder is going to sign in Belgrade the death-bearing armistice conditions. In Arad, Jászi is distributing our possessions to the Roumanians. Károlyi is intriguing to undermine the power of

THE CROWN PRINCE OTTO
(*de jure* KING OF HUNGARY).

(To face p. 122.)

Mackensen, who, at the head of forty to fifty thousand men, is the only armed hope remaining in the midst of destruction. A deputation of magnates, all, without exception, patriotic, faithful lords, has, inconceivably, arrived at Eckhardsau, to ask the King for his resignation. It is more than one can bear.

The country is going through the horrors of decomposition while still alive; its counterfeit head is rotting and its members falling off. And there is no silence in our distracting grief; the great decay is accompanied by revolting continuous applause. Those who cause the ruin applaud themselves. In the press, in their speeches, on their posters, in their writings: their applause drowns the groans of agony. The day begins with this abject applause, for it appears in the morning papers, and in the evening it follows us home and haunts our dreams; it tears our self-respect to shreds, for it is a perpetual reminder of our own impotence. The press with its foreign soul, which has enmeshed public opinion completely, now prostitutes the soul and language of Hungary; it has betrayed and sold us; it applauds our degradation, jeers and throws dirt at the nation which has given its partisans a home.

The chief writer of Budapest's Jewish literature, Alexander Bródy, has written an article in an evening paper about the German Emperor, of whom he used to speak, not so long ago, when he was still in power, as if he were a demi-god. Now he starts as follows: "One of the world's greatest criminals, Wilhelm Hohenzollern, has escaped from his country, and in Holland has begged his way into the castle of Count Bentinck. There he slept last night with about ten others, a trifling part of his accursed race, with his always smart red-faced (because always drunk) son, the wife of the latter, Cecilia, and with the Mother-Empress, that shapeless female of the human species." And he ends up: "Moaning, sick, uncomfortable, the escaped Kaiser lies on his bed. And for the present the 'poor old man' only trembles for his life; they may spit into his face, they may put him on his bended knees—nothing matters so long as his life is granted."

He who now writes like this is the master of those radical journalists who form the major part of the present government. That is the spirit which rules over the forum to-day. That is the tone which is assumed by those who claim to speak for the nation, which for nearly a thousand years has enjoyed the reputation of being the most chivalrous nation of Europe.

This article, however, roused Hungarian society even from its present torpor. Only the meanest kick the unfortunate. The paper received several thousand letters of protest, and many subscribers returned their copies. But what is the good of that? The paper takes no notice of protests, and the shame of the cowardly notice, like many other disgraceful actions committed in our name, will recoil upon us, and we shall have to bear its disgrace.

How long must we suffer this? Good, gracious God, how long will it last?

There is no place we can look to for consolation. From the frontiers, narrowing round us every day, fugitive Hungarians are pouring in. On all the roads of the land despoiled and homeless people are in flight. Carts and coaches, pedestrians and herds of cattle mix on the highway, and the trains roll along, dragging cattle trucks filled with homeless humanity. Villages, whole towns in flight . . .

Maddened, with weeping eyes, half Hungary is escaping towards the capital which has betrayed it. And the heart-breaking wave of humanity is no longer an unknown crowd: familiar names are mentioned, and one perceives familiar faces. They are coming by day and by night, those who have no hearth, no clothes, not a scrap of food; and instead of their clean homes they have to beg for quarters in low inns, for fantastic prices, even if it is but for a single night . . .

Rain poured down in the street. A cold wind blew at the corners as I walked with a little parcel under my arm towards a small hotel on the boulevards. I got the news this morning: some dear, good people have arrived there, robbed of everything they possessed. The hotel was ill-ventilated and dirty. The lift did not work, and I climbed painfully up the dark stairs. Muddy footsteps had left their mark on the dirty, crumpled

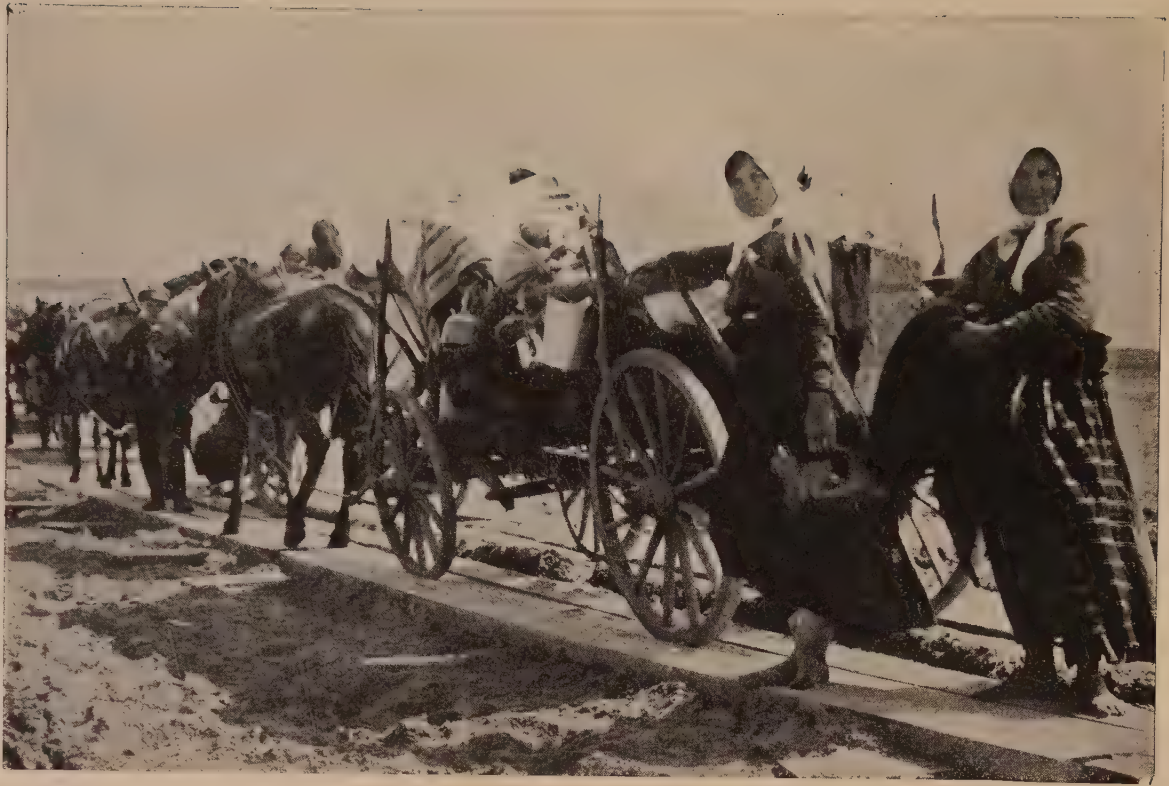


Photo. Erdelyi, Budapest.

"ON ALL THE ROADS . . . HOMELESS PEOPLE ARE IN FLIGHT."

carpet. And the whole place was pervaded with a stench made up of kitchen smells and the pungent odour of some insecticide.

In the dusk of the third floor's corridor I could not distinguish the numbers of the rooms. I opened a door at haphazard. The air of the room met me like a filthy, corrupt breath. A Polish Jew in his gabardine was standing near the window and, swaying from the hip, was explaining something with an air of importance to a clean-shaven co-religionary, dressed in the English style. A few men stood in the middle of the room, and foreign bank-notes tied in bundles lay on the table. They seemed to be Russian roubles. One man threw a newspaper over the table and came towards me. "What do you want?" he asked, rather embarrassed, though he spoke threateningly.

"I made a mistake," I said, and banged the door.

Behind the next door I found the friends for whom I was looking. The wintry darkness was lit up by an electric light near the bed, on which a pale little boy was lying. The other child was huddled up in a chair, swinging his legs wearily. Their father stood with his back to me, between the two wings of the curtain, and was gazing through the window into the November rain. The mother was sitting motionless near the little invalid; her two hands lay open in her lap, as if she had dropped everything. When she recognised me she did not say a word, but just nodded, and tears came to her eyes. Her husband turned back from the window. His face was a picture of rebelling despair. He clenched his fists, and, while he spoke, walked restlessly up and down the room.

"The Roumanians have taken everything we possessed; nothing is left, though we have worked hard all our lives. They robbed us in our very presence. We had to look on and could do nothing to prevent it. Then they drove us out of the house with this sick child."

"What is the matter with it?"

"Typhus, and yet they showed no mercy."

The sick boy tossed his head from one side to the other and groaned in his sleep. His groans are not the only ones that the shabby gray walls had heard this year. Rooms that are never unoccupied, rooms like great stuffy cupboards that are crammed with humanity. Their complements arrive and are crammed into them, awaiting with trembling heart the hour when some new arrivals, able to pay more, will crowd them out again. Up and out on to the road again, to drag with them the horrible vision of their lost land, their destroyed home, through the great town which has squandered without mercy that which was theirs and now has no pity for them.

But there is also another drawer in the cupboard: that other room, the man in his gabardine, the clean shaven one, the foreign money on the table . . . No, these don't suffer. These have come to take possession of what is left of Hungary.

Through the influence of Trotski, Jews from Hungary who were prisoners of war, became in Russia the dreaded tyrants of lesser towns, the heads of directorates. The Soviet now sends these people back as its agents. Will the government prevent them from coming? Will it arrest them? Probably not. Many believe that during his stay in Switzerland Károlyi came to an agreement with the Bolsheviki and now abets the world-revolutionary aims of the Russian terror. Sinister tales circulate under the walls of the houses of Pest. What madness! An agricultural country like Hungary is no soil for that seed. And yet . . . A few days ago an alarming rumour spread. In vain did the government attempt to suppress it. The news leaked out that as soon as it had come to power the government received a wireless message from the Russian Workers' and Soldiers' Council, who sent their fraternal greetings and promised that the Russian Soviet would send help and food if only the Hungarian proletariat would join it in its war against the Capitalism of the Allies. For, said the wireless: "The freeing of the toiling masses is possible only through a proletarian world-revolution. Unite, Hungarian proletarians! Long live the world-revolution! Long live the dictatorship of the proletariat! Long live the world's Soviet-republic!"

This message, kindled by the fire of class hatred, spread its sparks over the Russian swamps, over the Carpathians, and fell glowing into Károlyi's nefarious camp. Nobody trod on it to extinguish it, it was kept alive, in secret, among them. No wonder they are uneasy.

. . . .

November 14th.

The days are getting shorter and shorter, and darkness comes earlier every day.

The lamp was lit on my table. Count Emil Dessewffy was telling me about his journey to Eckhardsau. Now and then he fixed his strong single-eyeglass into his orbit, then again he toyed with it between his long, thin fingers, as if it were a shining coin. He was obviously nervous; and he kept crossing and uncrossing his legs.

"Prince Nicolas Eszterhazy, Baron Wlassics, Count Emil Széchényi and I went there. The Cardinal Primate declined at the last moment."

"How could you bring yourselves to such a step?"

"Our intention was to check Károlyi's machinations, to obtain the resignation of the King, and to persuade his Majesty to stand aside temporarily. At first the King wouldn't listen to reason. He said he had taken the oath to the Hungarian people; if others wanted to break their oath towards him, let them arrange that with their conscience; he was not going to perjure himself. We explained to him that as he had already transferred, alas, his supreme command to Károlyi, he would safeguard the interests of poor Hungary and of the dynasty better by standing aside during the period of transition, than by hanging on obstinately to his formal right. By this he might frustrate the attempt of those who are fishing in troubled waters to force the nation to face the *fait accompli* of a deposition by violence. The King stamped his foot and declared several times that whatever might happen he would not stand aside. We explained the advantages of the step from various points of view, and at last made him understand that after the mistakes that had already been made, no other solution was possible. Wlassics edited the document, but we couldn't make a final draft because no foolscap paper could be found in the whole castle. We sent out for some paper. Then there was no ink, and we had to search for a pen. Time passed, and meanwhile the King went out shooting . . ."

"Went out shooting!" The whole tragedy seemed to be becoming a burlesque.

"Yes, we were rather shocked," said Dessewffy. "But later on we found that there was not a scrap of food in the castle, and the King had to obtain game so that the Queen and the children might not starve. It is all very sad. Their clothes too were left behind in Vienna. When they left Schönbrunn they just threw a few things hurriedly into the car. The children have no change of clothes. They even had to sleep for several nights without bedclothes. It's no good sending messages to Vienna: the Government Council, which has taken them under its protection, does not even answer."

I thought of the Austrian and Czech nobles, so favoured by the Hapsburgs, of those, who, insisting on their rights based on the Spanish etiquette of older times, were mortally offended if at some festivity at the Vienna Burg they could not stand in the immediate vicinity of the Emperor, or were put by mistake into a position somewhat inferior to their rank. Where were they? Where was the ruler's General Staff? The generals covered with orders? Where was the bodyguard with its commander, which "dies but never surrenders?" In the last days of Schönbrunn they all had withdrawn like the tide from the forsaken shore. "*Nous étions tout seuls*," the Queen had said.

"And then?" I asked Count Dessewffy.

"After a time some paper was brought, two sheets in all, and Széchényi sat down to make a clean copy of the document: he had the best handwriting of us all."

Dessewffy showed me the original document. It read:

"Since the day of my succession to the throne I have always tried to free my people from the horrors of this war—a war in the causation of which I had no share whatever. I do not wish that my person should be an obstacle to the prosperity of the Hungarian people. Consequently I resign all participation in the direction of affairs of State and submit in advance to the decision by which Hungary will

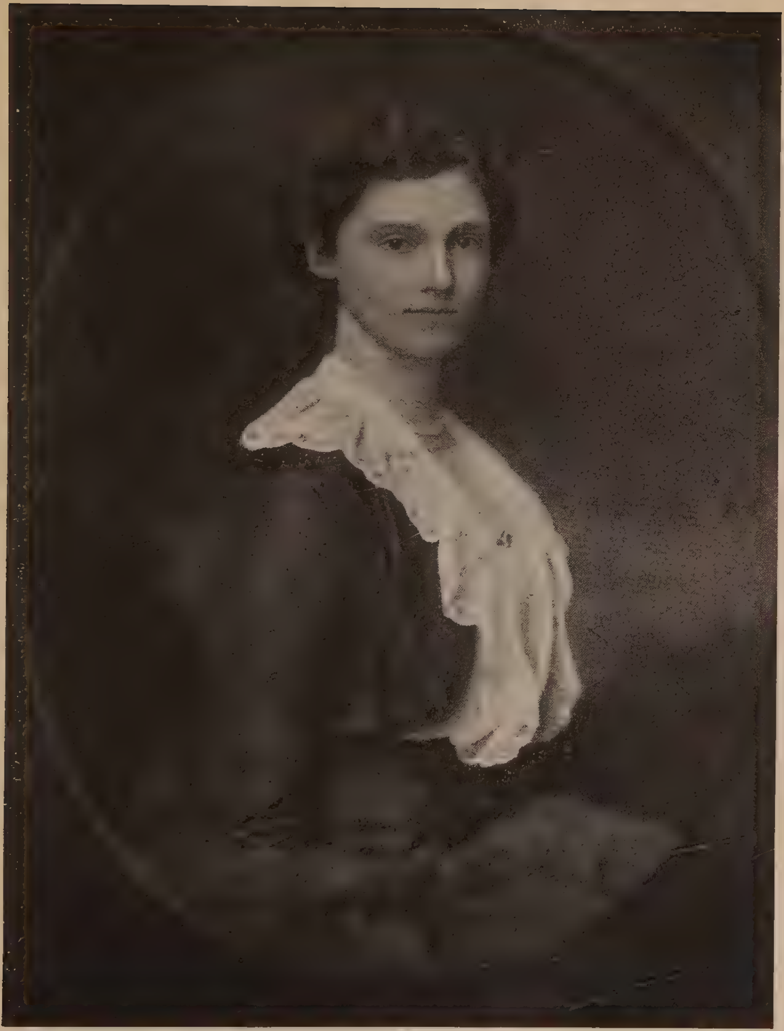


Photo. Kosel, Vienna.

QUEEN ZITA.

(To face p. 128.)

fix its future form of government. Dated at Eckhardsau, November 13th 1918.

CHARLES."

"The King still hesitated when the document lay ready for signature on the table. And as he wavered with the pen in his hand he looked the very picture of despair. During the last few days the hair on the sides of his head has turned gray. Suddenly tears came into his eyes, and he fell sobbing on Count Hunyadi's shoulder. Well, none of our eyes were quite dry . . ."

While Dessewffy talked on, I thought of a tale I had heard long, long ago.

It was evening in a village far away. The autumnal wind was rising, and the poplars round the house were soughing like organ pipes in a dark church. In the kitchen the maids were shelling peas. The light of the fire played over their hands, and the dry shells fell with a gentle rattle on the brick floor. Katrin, the housekeeper, was telling a story . . . "And the wicked knights went into the King's tent, armed with halberds and maces, and said in a terrible voice: 'Give up your crown or you shall die the death.' The beautiful Queen folded her hands imploringly, and the King took his crown off his head . . ." That was the story. The maids cried over the poor king, and in their hearts approved of him.

In stories it is the unfortunate who are always right, in reality it is those on whom fortune smiles.

. . . .

November 15th.

"Long live Michael Károlyi! Elect him President of the Republic! . . ." Again a paper disease has infected the houses' skin.

In the first year of the war Michael Károlyi had betted that he would be the president of the Hungarian Republic . . . Will he win his bet tomorrow? But whoever may win, Hungary will be the loser.

Posters . . . new posters appear above the old ones. A new shame covers the old, and that is all that changes in our lives. Big flags float in the wind on the boulevards. Flags are hoisted on the electric lamp-posts, and above the house entrances the old ones flap about. The government has ordered the beflagging of every house in the country, and its newspapers are preparing the mood of the morrow. They announce in big type:

THE RED FLAG HAS BEEN HOISTED IN THE FRENCH TRENCHES.

REVOLUTION HAS BROKEN OUT IN BELGIUM.

SWITZERLAND IS ON THE EVE OF A REVOLUTION.

I heard a little school-girl say to her friend: "Károlyi is a great man. He makes the fashion, now even the French are imitating us . . ."

"Long live . . ." shouted the walls and the shop windows, but the people were silent. Why? Why don't they tear down the disgraceful posters? Why are they resigned, why do I alone protest? Or are there more of us, only we don't know of each other? I looked carefully at the passing faces. Their eyes passed indifferently over the posters. Nothing mattered to them. I walked quickly, as if haunted, a stranger among the soulless crowd.

I reached Károlyi's palace. The one-storeyed house, built in the Empire style, looked low under its old roof among the high, newly erected buildings. The row of windows was dark: Károlyi had already moved into the Prime Minister's house. The first floor was inhabited only by the tenant of half the building, Count Armin Mikes, and I had come to see his wife. Since the events of October I had not been there.

The little side gate opened as I rang, noiselessly, as if automatically, and the *conciêrge* looked out of his *loge* and disappeared. Nothing stirred. Under the deep arch of the entrance my steps alone resounded; they echoed strangely, as if invisible hands were dropping things behind me.

I stopped for an instant. The soul of the place seemed to be whispering in the dark. On the right side a corridor was visible through a glass-panelled door, its walls covered with revolutionary pictures, and at its end a side staircase led into Károlyi's apartments. I shuddered, as one does when one enters a house where a murder has been committed. The traitors—perjured officers, Gallileist students, deserters—congregated up there, in the dark rooms, in the nights of October. Those who sold us and, among themselves, sentenced Tisza to death whispered and advised up there.

I went on. From the semi-obscurity of the huge staircase, marble seemed to tumble down like a frozen waterfall. Beyond, in the garden, the trees whispered in the cold wind.

Countess Mikes' small drawing-room was light and warm. I found a gathering of Transylvanians there, and beyond the room the notorious house, the whole town, seemed to have disappeared. My own sufferings were forgotten in the recital of theirs, and I was no longer alone in my grief, for all who were present shared it with me. They helped to raise up hope, because they knew what patriotism was, it is an old legacy of theirs. The strength and the will power which supported Hungary throughout her most disastrous periods, when the Turks from the south and the Germans from the west trod on Hungary's soil, had their source in Transylvania. When the fire of resistance was extinguished everywhere else, it went on burning among its inhabitants. And so after every dark night our race has gone to Transylvania to kindle anew the flame which has lighted it back into the dying country.

Great, suffering Transylvania, what is thy reward for this?

There they sat, Transylvanian men and women, the descendants of ancient princes, sufferers with shaded eyes. And as I looked at them there appeared behind their handsome faces the dreamlike outlines of a bluish-green landscape. As if seen in the crystal of an antique emerald ring, distant, dreamy trees appeared: two pointed poplars reached towards the sky: down below, among the meadows, a willow-bordered brook flowed softly: wagons rumbled on the winding road: a horseman came slowly, with a sack across the saddle in front of him. Beyond, the meadow rose to a velvety hillock, where an ancient spire, a little village, a tiny Székler village, nestled . . .

A wanderer told me the tale this summer, when I was in Transylvania. It happened during the war, in 1916. It was when the alarm was raised for the first time, and one day the cry passed through undefended Transylvania, "The Roumanians are coming!" In mad haste it spread through the counties, rushed along the electric wires, rang in the bells: "Save yourselves!" One village carried the next with it, Transylvania was fleeing.

In the village of Gelencze, on the bank of the rippling brook, at the foot of the hillock, there was silence. It was just like any other day; the people were working in the fields. Meanwhile the Roumanians crept cautiously through the undefended Transylvanian passes. One morning early, soon after the break of day, like some awful sudden death, they fell upon the people of Gelencze, there in their fields in the midst of their peaceful work. The people were helpless. Only one old Székler raised his spade, and fell with a shout among the rifles. They knocked him down, but he did not die; so they nailed him to a plank and dragged him into the forest that he might die there, alone. He was heard till nightfall, struggling and cursing the Roumanians.

That is how Gelencze was informed of the invasion of Transylvania. The alarm, the cry of warning, had passed it by, had missed it on the way. The telegraph wires carried the news, but they passed over its head, and not a word, not a sound came to bring warning. The Government, the County, the District, forgot—Hungary forgot the little village.

A wanderer told me all this, there, just outside the village of Gelencze, when it was still ours. And as I listened to the sad story it became bigger and deeper, so deep that the whole of Transylvania had room in it . . . The hillock became the mass of Transylvania's mountains, the brook became all Transylvania's rivers, and the fate of the village was Transylvania's fate.

"Do you remember how I promised you that summer, down there, that I would write a book of Transylvania, that I would trumpet the rights of your land, your race? I was to proclaim the wrongs you have suffered and call to account those who directed Hungary's fate and for ever forgot the Hungarian folk in Transylvania. How they delivered you to the tender mercies of your foes, and armed neither your soul nor your arm for resistance

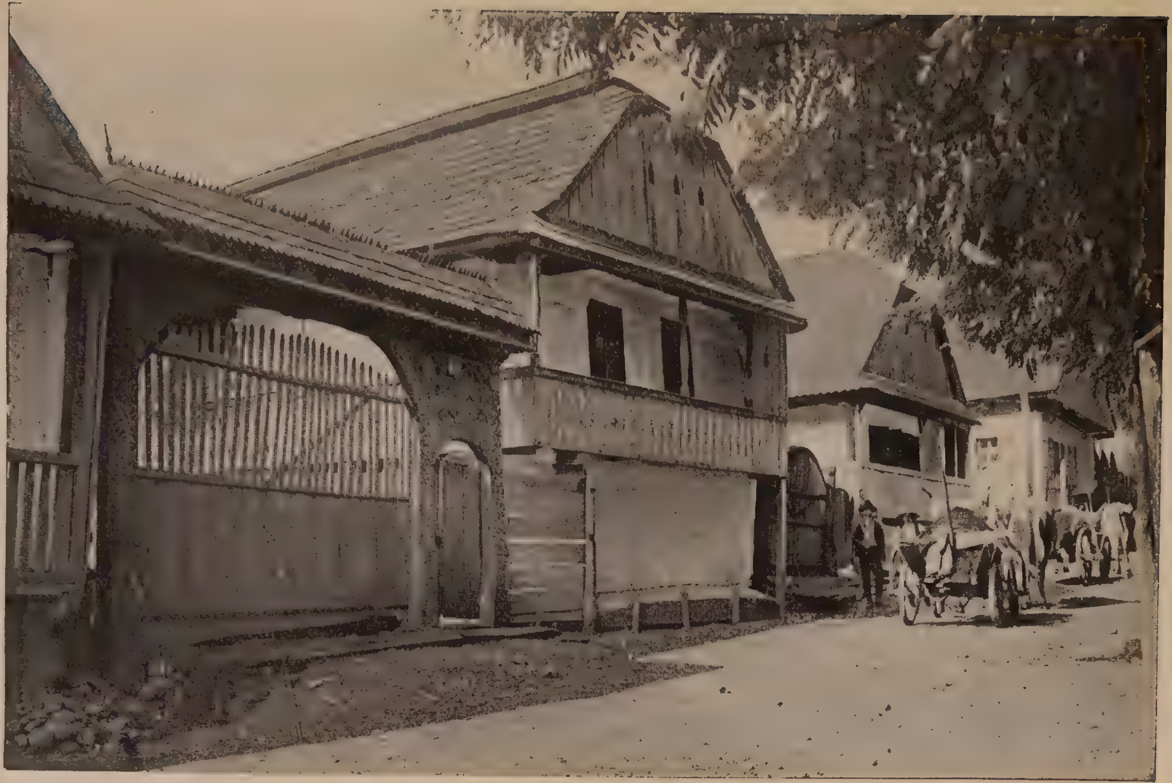


Photo. Erdelyi, Budapest.

"A TINY SZEKLER VILLAGE."

. . . A forgotten village! Do you remember? I said that that should be the title of my book. You were nothing but a forgotten village to those who wielded power in Hungary. The sufferings of Transylvania never caused them a moment's inconvenience . . . And the present government surpasses them all. As if it had decided on your destruction it now sends out an old accomplice of the Roumanian *Irredenta* to speak in the defence of the victim whom he himself has condemned to death. Oscar Jászi deals to-day in Arad with Transylvania's fate."

Hate and disgust were depicted on the faces of the Transylvanian women. That man of Galician origin, the internationalist who wanted to make an eastern Switzerland of our country, and who hated everything that was Hungarian to such an extent that his hatred made him forget the traditional caution of his race and exclaim in a fury when speaking of us, "If they don't obey, let them be exterminated"—he is sent there to negotiate in the name of the Hungarian race! The very spirit in which he conducted the negotiations showed his eagerness to revenge himself on the nation which had given him hospitality: he renounced what was not his, gave up rights which were ours, and sold Transylvania to Manin's Roumanian National Council, which he and Károlyi had themselves created during the October days. In Arad the Roumanians speak already of national sovereignty! They claim a Roumanian supremacy and *twenty-six* Hungarian counties! They demand that the Hungarian Popular Government shall disarm the police, disband the Hungarian National Guards, punish all energetic officers, but . . . that it shall provide arms for the Roumanian National Guards and pay for its men and officers out of the Hungarian taxpayer's pocket. Jászi and the revolutionary Government delegates have promised all this. Meanwhile the Roumanians are dragging out the negotiations, and their voices become more and more sharp and exacting, for do they not know that every hour takes the royal Roumanian troops deeper into the heart of undefended Transylvania?

And while at the county hall of Arad the traitors are at work, the main column of Mackensen's always victorious army is rolling over the bridge across the Maros. Endless rows of motor columns pass. Behind them comes an unceasing flow of army service corps wagons, covered ammunition wagons, lorries, carts and waggonets. Hours and days pass, and they are still going on, orderly, gray, grave. They do not rob, they do not pillage, they just go on, from the foot of the Balkan Mountains, from the frontiers of Transylvania, through Hungary. On foot, on horseback, on wagons, in close columns, on they go, silently, homewards.

With them goes hope, and Károlyi watches with an anxious eye: if he turned back, if he lifted his fist . . . And Roumanian heads in sheepskin caps appear above the crests of the mountains, look after the Germans, and their feet stamp on Transylvania's heart.

My bitterness overflowed and I burst out, "We shall take it back!"

The Transylvanian women pressed my hand.

"We shall take it back," said one of them; "I do not know how, but I feel it will be so."

As I came out of the house I saw my brother Béla come towards me. He said hurriedly, "I met Emma Ritoók, who also is in despair. She asked me to tell you that she must speak to you." That again reminded me that probably there were many of us, only we did not know of each other . . . My mother, my brothers and sisters, Countess Zichy, the Transylvanian women, Emma Ritoók, they are faces I can see, voices I can hear, but beyond them there must be many women scattered in the great silent multitude, left to themselves, who weep over the past and fear the future . . .

When the electric tram stopped I stepped forward to get off. Somebody knocked me in the back. My feet missed the steps and I fell, face first, into the road. I looked back. It was a fat young man, in brand-new field uniform. His characteristic nose fell like a soft bag over his lips. He jumped over me without saying a word, nor did he attempt to help me. He was in a hurry . . . I just caught sight of his two fleshy ears under his cap as he rushed on.

That is typical of the streets of Budapest to-day; in fact that is the only reason why I mention it. Unfortunately I sprained my ankle.

CHAPTER IX

November 16th.

I AM ill after my fall yesterday. An icy wind blows at my window. Loud voices rise from the street.

Presently my mother looked out and said, "The saddlers and leather-workers are assembling; they've got red tickets in their hats."

Hours passed by. Suddenly I heard a loud buzzing overhead and an aeroplane flew through the grey air over the streets. Parliament at this moment is proclaiming the Republic—Károlyi's National Council is announcing that all Hungary shall be governed by the Republic of Pest. Some handbills were brought up to me from the street . . . "Victorious Revolution . . . Kingship is dead, long live the independent Hungarian Republic!"

I buried my head in my pillow, unable to say a word. There seemed to be a little mill in my chest and another in my head, and both went round and round madly, grinding me to powder. Then I became aware that there was a newspaper on my table—the smell of fresh bad printer's ink betrayed its presence. It contained an account of what had happened; everything passed off in an orderly way and nobody had prevented it. Another opportunity missed, another day of hope gone! The House of Commons, the Lords, met, resigned themselves without protest, and the newspaper announces: "This is a red-letter day in Hungary's history . . ."

Those who had been present told me afterwards that early in the day the trade unions proceeded from their meeting place to the House of Parliament.

They carried red flags, big placards, and a black coffin marked "Kingship is dead." The brass bands of the workmen and of the postal workers blared, bands of gypsies and choral societies gave voice. Red insignia everywhere. The nation's colours had disappeared even from the caps of the national guards and they too sported red labels with "Long live the Hungarian Republic." The only two Hungarian flags, and small ones at that, were placed on the front of the House of Parliament. Over the porch of the central entrance a huge red flag floated in the breeze as if Internationalism from its newly conquered home were putting its tongue out in derision at the crowd, which it had beguiled so far by means of cockades of the national colours and with white chrysanthemums. Opposite, on the buildings of the High Court and the Ministry of Agriculture, red drapery was displayed all along the first storey. It looked just as if a gaping wound, inflicted with a giant axe, had cut them in twain.

The shops were closed. Trams were not running. Traffic had stopped like a breath withheld, ready to cough itself again into the streets of the town. A cordon of sailors lined up in front of the House: rather a painful surprise for the government, this. Heltai had come back from Pressburg with his men in a special train: surely the Republic was not going to be proclaimed without him! So the defence of Upper Hungary is now suspended for the time being while Heltai adorns himself with the national colours: he entered Pressburg under the red flag. There are rumours that his sailors are connected with certain robberies. In Pest it is murmured that he knows something about Tisza's murder.

Five aeroplanes circled over the square, the crowd kept increasing, and then a giant advertisement on a long stretched canvas was brought out on poles from a side street. The wind blew it up like a sail and made fun of its inscription: "This morning in Parliament Square we shall proclaim Count Michael Károlyi President of the Republic!"

It was ten o'clock. The Speaker's bell rang. And the Hungarian House of Commons, to its eternal disgrace, without a word of protest, dissolved itself in impotence. In the other wing of the building the

Lords had met at the same time. Only thirty-two were present. They too had forgotten the old classical cry: "*Moriamur pro rege nostro!*" Only Baron Julius Wlassics, the president, spoke. He did not pronounce the dissolution of the Lords. He said as little as possible, and ended his address with the words: "Our constitution decrees that the dissolution of the House of Commons as part of our two-chamber legislature will naturally render the further constitutional functions of the House of Lords impossible, consequently I hereby suspend the sitting of the House of Lords."

This was the last act of an institution which was born over a thousand years ago at Pusztaszer, had become the dignified Diet of Buda, the heroic National Assembly of Pressburg, Francis Deák's parliament. And under the cupola rose the voice of that which was begotten by yesterday's treason, murder and destruction, and will undoubtedly engender anarchy.

"Honoured National Assembly . . ." John Hock, the notorious priest, the President of the so-called National Assembly, raised his voice. Nobody can tell for whom he spoke. National Assemblies are elected bodies, and those who were there had been elected by nobody.

In the newspapers the speech was given in long columns of thick type. My eyes passed over them, I saw only the speaker in his black cassock, hiding behind the black columns, his diabolical face drawn between his shoulders. A guilty priest, a guilty Hungarian, who has betrayed both his God and his country. Once in his youth he was the adulated preacher of the crowd. Then his downfall began. The gifted but morally weak man with a corrupt soul got into debt and became the political tool of his creditors . . . That brought him into Károlyi's camp.

His accomplices, who like to compare their little rebellion made in the Hotel Astoria romantically to the great French Revolution, call Károlyi their Mirabeau and have dubbed John Hock the Abbe Siéyès. Do they call their ladies, Countess Károlyi, Baroness Hatvany, Mrs. Jászi, Laura Polányi, Rosa Schwimmer, conforming to this precedent, *sans-culottes* and *tricoteuses?* . . . There they are, all of them, in the big hall under the cupola, pantingly enjoying the hour of their triumph. And John Hock goes on with his speech. I see him before me, as I have seen him so often in the street and occasionally in the little office of the manager of the Urania scientific theatre, whither he took the manuscript of his play *Christ* and whither he went to talk politics, speaking in mysterious, dark prophecies. His head always reminded me of the characteristic old illustrations of Mephistopheles in *Faust*. The little black velvet cap with the peacock's feather would suit him to perfection. On his unkempt, domed skull the hair is short and looks more like bristles than hair. In his crafty, wicked eyes there is something of the look of those animals that live underground. His ill-shaved face is blue and is always unwashed. His cassock is covered from neck to foot with grease-spots; now and then he fumbles with his indescribably dirty hands in the depths of his pockets. He has to stoop down to reach their bottom. Then he produces a dented snuff-box, and cocking his little finger with grotesque grace, stretches his thumb and index finger into the box. His filthy fingers lift the snuff to his nostrils, brown with continuous snuffing. Then he leans his head back and shuts his eyes, in expectant ecstasy.

So he stood on the platform in the hall, filled with applause, after having proclaimed the republic and having proposed that: "the holidays of royal paraphernalia should be abolished and that the glorious days of the revolution and the republic, the 31st of October and the 16th of November, should for all times be declared National holidays." Then he read out a declaration, imposed on Károlyi by Jászi, Kúnfi, Kéri and Landler, "in the name of the Hungarian nation and by the will of the people . . ." by which it was decided that Hungary was a Popular Republic, independent and separate from any other country, the supreme power being provisionally in the hands of the popular government, headed by Michael Károlyi and supported by the National Council. It declared that the popular government must urgently legislate and adopt general, secret, equal, direct suffrage, including women in the electorate, for elections for the National Assembly,

FATHER JOHN HOCK,

PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL,
OPENING THE REVOLUTIONARY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
AFTER THE DISSOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
AND THE LORDS.

(*To face p. 138.*

Communal and Legal councils; decree the freedom of the press, trial by jury, freedom of assembly, and take the necessary steps for the agricultural population to obtain possession of the land.

The public in the hall shouted its unanimous assent after every point.

Then Károlyi rose to speak, to speak with that frightful voice which is the natural consequence of his infirmity. He proclaimed the deposition of the Hapsburgs, declaimed Wilson's sacred principles, the League of Nations, the right of peoples to decide their own fate, of eternal peace, and wound up in a pathetic stutter: " only through sufferings, only through the sea of blood caused by the war, could the peoples of Europe and the people of Hungary understand that there was only one possible policy: the policy of pacificism . . . The policy of pacificism was no more a restricted local policy, but the policy of the world . . . The Hungarian nation, the Hungarian state and the Hungarian race must cling to this world-policy, because only such nations will prosper, only such nations will progress, as can adapt themselves to, and adopt, the world-policy which is expressed in the single word *Pacificism.*"

The hour was tragical and I had suffered much, but I could not help laughing. Never did pitiable blabber say anything more stupid than this, nor anything more wicked, for while he is proclaiming pacificism, militarism armed to the teeth is invading Hungary from all sides. Is it mere stupidity or the last service to a horrible treason? Whatever it be, after this it is useless to analyse Károlyi's mentality.

The Mirabeau of the Astoria was followed by the spokesman of the Social Democratic Party: Sigmund Kunfi-Kunstätter, the Minister for Public Welfare. He is said to be one of Lenin's emissaries. His face is like a vulture's, his eyes are cunning and inquisitive. After John Hock's rhetoric and Károlyi's disgraceful stutter, this cashiered Jewish schoolmaster, who has changed his religion three times for mercenary reasons but has remained faithful to his race, spoke with fiendish ingenuity. He mixed truths with utopias, promised and threatened, and in the certitude of his victory tore asunder the veil that hid the future.

"By proclaiming this day a free, popular republic," said Kunfi, "we have not only achieved great political progress, but we have started on a road of which the past revolution and this day are not the end but only important milestones . . . Political freedom, the republic, the most radical political democracy, all these are only means which shall enable the great struggle, the fight between poverty and wealth, to start easier and under better auspices . . ."

This is the battle cry of class-war, and till the war comes Kunfi offers as a narcotic social reforms: the levelling of poverty and wealth, land for the soldiers back from the front. And he promises that he will force the entailed estates, big capital and great industry, to give up everything that "justice" and the will of the people claim, and that in such a way that it will not interfere with the continuity of economic life.

This programme, which is not an end but only a landmark, expresses as yet Kautsky's ideas. But then, suddenly, it is no longer Kautsky; it is Lenin and Liebknecht who speak through this representative of their creed.

"Political democracy is only a tool for us," said Kunfi; "this political freedom is valuable to us only because we believe and hope that by its means we shall be able to carry through the great social transformation just as bloodlessly, and with as few victims, as we have managed to achieve the Hungarian Revolution."

"Long live the social revolution," shouted the gallery.

In his next words Kunfi answered the shout and in the exhilaration of this triumph gave himself away:

"Our revolutionary work is not over yet! After reforming our institutions we shall have to alter mankind!"

So he confessed that it was not the people who wanted his institutions, but that his institutions wanted the people. And as he went on he admitted that the men of the future were not to be Hungarians. "Every place in this country must be filled by individuals who are inspired by the spirit of the new revolution, of this new Hungary, of this

SIGISMUND KUNFI *alias* KUNSTÄTTER,

LENIN'S EMISSARY. PEOPLE'S COMMISSARY FOR EDUCATION.

(To face p. 1

new world." . . . His words died away in a last sentence which, if it is understood by the nation, ought to rouse it to desperate resistance, for it is the proclamation of world-Bolshevism: "Every slave-nation stands this day with reddening cheeks on the stage of the world, and one after the other the peoples will rise with red flags and will sing in a powerful symphony the hymn of the world's freedom . . ."

It is to our everlasting shame that no single Hungarian rose to choke these words. In the Hall of Hungary's parliament Lenin's agent could unfurl at his ease the flag of Bolshevism, could blow the clarion of social revolution and announce the advent of a world-revolution, while outside, in Parliament Square, Lovászy and Bokányi, accompanied by Jászi, informed the people that the National Council had proclaimed the republic. On the staircase, Michael Károlyi made another oration. Down in the square, Landler, Welter, Preusz and other Jews glorified the republic—there was not a single Hungarian among them. That was the secret of the whole revolution. Above: the mask, Michael Károlyi ; below : the foreign race which has proclaimed its mastery.

And bands of Hungarian workmen and gypsies played the National Anthem and the Marseillaise, and Gallileists sang the Internationale. Humiliated, with bitter anger, I read in the newspapers of hundreds of thousands of people, furious cheers, and the frenzied happiness of the multitude. Thus is the news spread over the country, while those who were present say that the people were shivering in the icy north wind that blew across the square, that they took everything with indifference, and only cheered when ordered to do so by their leaders.

Only when the National Anthem was played and a few Gallileists refused to uncover did the crowd knock their hats off. That was all that was done for the sake of Hungary's honour. Nobody proclaimed Michael Károlyi the president of the republic. The Socialists would not have it. Is he of no more use? Do they not need him any more? As a compensation, Kunfi ordered the National Guards to carry him shoulder high. So Károlyi was carried between the ranks of the commandeered trade unions across the square. The white canvasses with the inscription: "Let us proclaim Károlyi President of the Republic," were rolled up in silence.

The workmen went home and said among themselves that now everything would be all right. There will be good times, and things will be cheap. The rabble, however, blackguarded the king and cursed the "gentle-folk." At the head of one of their groups a shabby drunken woman walked with unsteady steps. Shaking her unkempt head she put her arms round the neck of a young fellow and dragged him along. After a time she let her companion go, chose another, and hugged and dragged him along while she danced some immodest steps.

Some peasant proprietors who had come there accidentally, walked in silence towards the city, their stout boots striking the cobbles firmly. In all this throng they alone represented the people of great Hungary.

A friend of mine followed them, to see what they would do. At last one of them, an old peasant, who seemed to have thought it over, stopped and turned to the others, measuring his words:

"This republic is a fine thing; but now I should like to know who is going to be King?"

. . . .

November 17th.

How long and terrible the night can be! Clocks strike, one after the other; one gently, another hesitatingly, and the fine old alabaster clock is hoarse, and its chest rattles between every stroke. Down in the street a carriage races past at a gallop, then a single shot rings out in the silence. The shot must have been fired in the street behind our house . . . Then everything relapses into silence for hours. The floor creaks, as if somebody is walking barefooted towards my bed, though nothing moves. How often did the clock strike? I waited impatiently for the sound, and yet forgot to count the strokes. I lit the candle. Not even half the night is over, and it has lasted such an age. Then that hopeless, helpless despair came over me again. I don't want to think. It does no good. Yet in spite of myself something forces itself into my mind, leans over me, like a ghost. It is *yesterday*. It comes stealthily over the threshold, towards me. I shut my eyes in vain: I can see it though it is dark. I see the day with all its shame and cowardice. I can see those who have wrought our ruin triumph and applaud in the exhilaration of their success: "Long live the Republic!" My sprained ankle smarts suddenly. The man who knocked me off the tram is conjured up: his head sails towards me through the air, as though borne by huge protruding ears. His nose projects enormously, and his mouth opens wide and shouts "Long live the Republic!" The big hall under the cupola of the House of Parliament was full of mouths like this, with soft, flabby lips, and the curly thick lips of women. It was these who proclaimed the republic for Hungary. And we submitted, suffered it, and held our peace.

I try to calm myself, to restrain myself. The clocks strike again. Then silence once more, spreading like a thread which a spider draws out. The silence becomes longer, longer . . . I can stand it no more—if only something would make a noise! I sit up, shivering, and strike the pillow with my fist. That does not mend matters. A subdued moan resounds through the room, a pitiable, miserable little sound which comes from my heart . . .

Do others suffer as much as I do? I have spoken to nobody, have seen nobody. I don't know what they think. I have no one with whom to share my pain. Maybe that is the reason why it weighs so heavily upon me. I try to console myself. Things cannot go on like this. Like everything else it will pass. The revolution was made because the Jews were afraid of pogroms by the returning soldiers. The republic was made because the revolution was afraid of the counter-revolution. It is an accumulation of narcotics. But no narcotic lasts for ever. The only question is, what part of the victim is to be amputated while it lasts?

At last a square of light appeared at one side of the room. At first it was gray, then it became blue, and finally it turned into daylight. So there was a new day again; it has come with empty hands and who knows what it will take with it?

In the afternoon Emma Ritoók opened my door. "What happened to you?" she asked as she came to my bedside.

"A hero of the revolution knocked me off the tram."

"How do you know that he was a hero of the revolution?"

"By his ears . . . And then, he wore a brand-new uniform."

My friend was infinitely sad this day. Since we had last met, her credulous Hungarian nature had gone through an awful time. Despair and rebellion sounded in all her words. Years ago, when she attended for a term the lectures at Berlin University, she became acquainted with two Jews from Hungary. They met in the philosophy class. They were friends of her youth, and now these very people have made the rebellion of the Astoria Hotel against her country. She complained:

"They said that we were even incapable of arranging that by ourselves, that it needed Jews to obtain Hungary's independence for the Hungarians. I answered that we did not do it because it was unnecessary, that history would have brought us independence of her own accord. But they declared that humanity was sick and would not recover till a world revolution eliminated from this globe the last machine, the last book, the last sculpture, and the last violin too. This revolution must sweep away everything, so that nothing remains but man and the soil, because humanity is in need of a new soul, to begin everything from the very beginning."

"Tell them in my name that they are speaking for a race which has grown old, which suffers from senile decay and would like to be re-born. We are young, we have not yet exhausted our vitality, and innumerable possibilities are in store for us. Only a degenerate race can seek rejuvenation through destruction. Besides, if they want to re-create by these means a world torn from its past, it will not be enough to destroy the last book, the last statue and the last violin; they must destroy as well the last man who remembers."

"I shan't be able to tell them," she answered, "because I shan't see them again. Now it is not a question of philosophy, it is a question of my country. And that parts us for ever."

"Is that the reason why you sent me a message that you had a spiritual need to meet me?"

"We must do something. The men do nothing. We ought to organise the women. Unconsciously they are waiting for it. In the Club of Hungarian Ladies there are many who are of our way of thinking."

"There too? . . ."

The Club of Hungarian Ladies was founded a few years ago by a few aristocratic ladies inspired by Countess Michael Károlyi. For that reason I never joined it. Under the publicly proclaimed object of intellectual intercourse I suspected the ultimate political purpose. I had been right. In case of the admittance of women to the franchise, this club was required to furnish Michael Károlyi with a ready camp among intellectual women. The events of the last two weeks wrecked this plan, because the truth about Károlyi has begun to leak out. At one of their meetings the nationalist ladies, in opposition to the socialist, feminist and radical Jewish adherents of Countess Károlyi, had declared by a great majority for the territorial integrity of Hungary and had carried Emma Ritoók's resolution to address a protest to the women of the civilised world. Countess Károlyi, who was present, could not stand aside, so she promised that the government would bear the expenses of printing it and would see that the greatest possible publicity should be given to it abroad—on the sole condition that her husband should be allowed to have cognisance of the document. The members accepted the proposal, which seemed to forbode no danger to the protest, as it was to fight for the nation's right and it would have been folly to imagine that the government was opposed to that. They cheered Countess Károlyi and decided unanimously that although I did not belong to the club I should be asked to write the preface to the memorandum.

I accepted the commission. The interest of my country was at stake and I would have accepted the invitation whatever the source whence it came. Emma Ritoók brought the document back with her . . . Károlyi had looked through it and had struck out everything that might have been of any use to our cause. So that was the reason for Countess Károlyi's offer . . . A sieve that shall stop even the smallest national movement. We are cornered, and when we would cry for help the government puts its hand over our mouths. Officialdom holds down our hands when we would help ourselves.

"Put this carefully away," I said to my friend, looking at the mangled document. "One day this may be another proof of his treason."

Various handwritings alternated on the margin, besides the considerable cuts that had been made in the text.

"Jászi has read it, and Biró . . . This is Károlyi's handwriting; he even signed his name to it."

This was the first time I had seen his handwriting. Loosely formed characters, words run together, others only half finished, the lines slanting towards the corner of the page, capital letters in the middle of sentences and innumerable mistakes in spelling. It looked just like him . . .

"What shall we do now?" asked my friend. "We have worked in vain. The government will publish none but the revised document and it will stop any other from being sent abroad."

"I shall find some way," I answered; "but I will never permit my patriotism to be censored by Michael Károlyi."

"Refuse it," said my mother; "it is better it should not appear at all than appear in this form."

In the evening I wrote a letter to Count Emil Dessewffy, to whom I had mentioned the memorandum, asking him to use his social connections, or the services of the ever-increasing Territorial Defence League, to get it abroad in its original form. I wrote in pencil, at some length, and poured all my bitterness into the letter. I criticised men and events without mercy. I called Károlyi and his friends traitors and the leaders of the Social Democrats the advance guard of Bolshevist world-rule.

I felt relieved when I had sent the letter. Then, I don't know why, I began to feel rather nervous about it. That letter might land me in prison. Nonsense. How could it get into wrong hands?

. . . .

November 18th.

To-night the ground shook in this branded town. Mackensen's motor columns were passing through Budapest. They went, without stopping, dark, thundering, betrayed, disappointed, out into the wintry night . . . My sister-in-law told me she had seen them. Big waterproofs covered the clattering motors and only their lamps betrayed that there was life in them. Not a man was visible. Like the phantoms of war they came from distant battlefields.

They went on for hours and only once was their progress stopped. One lorry pulled up for an instant, a man climbed out from under the waterproof, took a little box, waved his hand, and disappeared in the dark. He must have been a Hungarian soldier whom they had brought with them, goodness only knows whence. And the waving of the solitary hand was the only greeting and good-bye that our German comrades in arms received from Hungary's capital. The gray ghostly mass restarted and the others followed . . .

We followed them in our minds, as the eyes of a shipwrecked crew on a sinking raft follow the ship which disappears over the horizon without bringing help.

It has happened . . . they are gone, and in their track follow those whom now nobody can stop . . . And yet, the 1st Home-defence regiment has arrived with its full equipment, and the regiments of Debreczen and Pécs are coming too. Another has come from Albania and more come from Ukraine, from France and from Italy. Through Innsbruck alone more than half a million Hungarian troops have rushed homeward. They are disarmed, disbanded—are no more. Meanwhile through the pass of Ojtoz a Roumanian force consisting of sixteen frontier guards has invaded Hungarian territory. They looked round, gave the sign, and were followed by a battalion. They arm and enlist the Transylvanian Roumanians, and the land is lost to us.

Last week a small detachment, a few Serbian troopers, rode into Mohács.

Mohács . . . Once upon a time the Hungarian nation, with its king and its bishops, bled to death there, resisting the terrific onslaught of the Turks. The brook Csepel ran red with Hungarian blood, and the land was covered with Hungarian dead as far as the eye could see. Now a handful of Serbian cavalry ride over the mournful, grandiose graves and tread the deathbed of the King. The field is peacefully green, the water is clean, and there are no corpses on the grass. And yet, to-day Mohács is a greater cemetery of Hungary than it was on the day of the great death, for to-day there are none left ready to die for her.

What a nightmare it all is! Down there the commander of the Serbian troops says: "I have been for seven years with my soldiers, and when we marched through Serbia we passed before our own houses, and not a single man entered his own home, but on they went, according to orders . . . The Serbian army has been at war since 1912, and yet it passed in front of its home, its little fields, its women, its children, went on and never stopped." They come, they come for conquest, and our men do not defend what is their own. How they must hate us, our land and our race which has sunk so low! How we have been poisoned by those who ought to lead us! With narcotic lies they have inoculated us and planted the plague in our souls.

If only one could get away from these maddening thoughts, could tear them out of one's brain and get a moment's rest. But it cannot be done. They cling to us obstinately. These winter days in bed are terrible, and awful are the long, sleepless nights. Sometimes I think that people don't go mad here because they are already all lunatics.

. . . .

November 19th.

Snow is falling. The roofs are white and shine against the background of the gray sky. Scanty, economical fires burn in our grates: the Serbians have occupied the coal-fields of Pécs, the Roumanians those of Petrozsény, so Hungary has no longer any coal, and the Czechs stop the supplies from Germany. In the gas-stove the flame is small and gives no heat. The new order diminishes the supply of electricity, and the globes have to be taken out of the chandelier. Only one is allowed in the room, and it sends its light sideways into a corner. I hobbled over to my mother. The partial light left dark recesses in the corners, and made the place unhomely, sad.

The table in the dining-room seemed to have changed too. In the silver vases there are still some evergreen twigs from our summer home, but flowers there are no longer. Everything is getting so expensive. Our fare diminishes every day too, but we pretend not to notice it. Every day sees the disappearance of something we were accustomed to. Things we used to take as granted have become luxuries. Already during the long years of war things were not always what they seemed: coffee was not coffee, nor were the tea, the sugar, or even the bread above suspicion. We got accustomed to substitutes, but now even these have disappeared. In the shops the shelves are empty, and the new stocks fail to appear. Those who can, buy and hoard. Germany and Austria have stopped sending us the products of their industries. We tighten our belts and get thinner and poorer every day.

Across the street one window is still lit up, though it is getting late. As I look up I can see a man making a selection of his clothes. He lifts up a coat, holds it under the lamp, puts it aside, then takes it up again; now he inspects a waist-coat, some linen. A woman comes in and they talk for a few moments. Then they throw an overcoat on the table and hide the rest in the bed, under the mattresses. They make a selection of boots too. The woman puts one pair with the overcoat, and they hide the others in the cupboard, behind some books.

Choosing and hiding of this kind goes on to-day in every house in the country.

The popular Government has issued a decree, striving to satisfy the demands of the disarmed troops by requisition. Its confidential agents are to visit the people in their homes and requisition clothes, linen and boots, without any compensation. Those who hide anything will have the whole of their supply with the exception of a single suit, confiscated and will be punished with a fine of 2,000 crowns or six months' imprisonment.

This is a curious order, for it affects principally those who have suffered most from the high prices of the war and the exactions of the profiteers, namely the middle-classes, whose poor, shabby, outworn clothes are the only remaining outward sign of their higher cultural position, and whose only means of clothing their children consists in utilizing every possible rag. Moreover there is a new element embodied in this order, for by it the authorities have taken the first step towards disposing of private property without due compensation. They lay claim to search homes, and thus the thin end of the wedge has been driven into the sacred rights of privacy and private property.

Suddenly shots were fired somewhere near the hospital. On the other side of the road, in the lighted room, the woman raised her head, and seeing that she had forgotten to lower the blinds, she hastened to do so, in order to hide the theft that she and her husband were committing in their own home, for themselves, on their own poor little hoard of worn-out clothes.

Even as I looked I was astonished at my own feelings. In my heart I approved of those who tried to evade the order: and yet, my ideas of honesty had not changed—it was the honesty of the law which had altered. Only three weeks ago it protected us, now it is a means of attack, and we, persecuted humanity, are only acting in our own defence when we conspire for its defeat.

Th ound of footsteps in the street roused me, for
rare thing after the doors of the houses are
The footsteps went by rapidly, as if in a
I listened for a time, wondering whether some
vere afoot—but no, nowadays it is only
walk slowly, steadily, that mean mischief.

. . . . . .

November 20th.

's through a mist and nobody can see
Some day, when we look back upon
hings may appear simple and clear
we are living through them, seem

mysterious and incomprehensible. Events come fast, crowding one on the other without rhyme or reason. Common sense is of no use, for our fate is woven by maniacs. We have occasional bright moments, little flickers which the storm extinguishes. If we see clearly for an instant, darkness falls before we can find our way, and in its gloom, fate deals us such blows that we become giddy and lose our bearings. Nothing helps. Everything is new and strange; in a present like this the past is no guide. One cannot acquire the habit of dying!—and Hungary is struggling in agony in the hands of her murderers.

To-day the lamp flared up in an unexpected way, for I heard news which staggered me, stopped the beating of my heart and left me speechless. I heard the familiar step of my brother Géza passing through the drawing-room to my mother's room, and rushed after him with a feverish desire to hear and to know. Perhaps he might be the bearer of hopeful news, as he used to be during the war; then, whenever he came to see mother, there had been a bright spot in our gloom. But now he sat in a state of collapse in the tall green armchair, and fury distorted his face.

"All these scoundrels are traitors. Lieut.-Colonel Julier has told me how damnably they have betrayed the country. They are leading it to destruction." He banged the table with his clenched fist. "Do you know that the armistice of Belgrade was superfluous? The Common High Command had arranged with General Diaz, who was the delegate of the Allies, for an armistice for us too as from the 4th of November, leaving the frontiers of Hungary untouched and fixing the pre-war frontiers as the line of demarcation. There was to be no enemy occupation. And on the 6th of November Michael Károlyi, in Belgrade, opened the flood-gates on us."

There was a weary silence in the room for a while. It was so terrible, so monstrous, that, though my opinion of Károlyi and his gang was low enough, I could scarcely believe it.

"Perhaps they—perhaps Károlyi didn't know the conditions of Diaz's armistice?"

"They did; it was in Károlyi's pocket before he went to Belgrade," my brother said. "They did it for the sake of power, for the doubtful honour that the conclusion of peace should be in their names. Franchet d'Espèray could not understand why they came. Then he gave them their medicine: 'If you want it, have it!' says he."

Everything seemed to be collapsing round us, even that which had till now remained standing, and it was as though the weight of it fell on us and buried us under its ruin. It seemed incomprehensible that the lamp still stood there, where it had been before, and the chairs, the couch, the cupboards . . . Then I saw my mother's hands as they clasped one another spasmodically in her lap. I heard her voice, which sounded as if it came struggling up among the ruins, with infinite pain:

"If the curse of an old woman carries any weight, I curse them!"

CHAPTER X.

November 21st.

TO-DAY the newspapers are full of the complaints of Károlyi's government. The government has sent protesting telegrams to the Allies, the Czechs, the Roumanians. It appeals to the armistice concluded with the Allied armies, to the Wilsonian principles, to world-saving pacifism. It clamours for justice, help, food, and coal. And Károlyi threatens that "if the Allies do not want to see the formation of 'green' forces—he does not mention the 'red' because he has already formed those—"if the Allies do not wish that this part of Europe should be given up to plunder, incendiarism and robbery, it is the eleventh hour . . ."

But the Allies are well aware that Károlyi's rule has already achieved all this, and they don't trouble to answer. On the other hand Kramarz, with whom Károlyi had conspired against the interests of his country during the war answers in the name of the Czechs, haughtily, derisively: "The Allies have decided that the territories inhabited by the Slovaks shall form part of the Czecho-Slovak Republic, and not of the Hungarian state. Consequently Hungary cannot conclude an armistice for the Slovak parts, as those have already been incorporated into Czecho-Slovakia." That is his answer, and the King of Roumania's answer is an appeal to his army: "Soldiers. The long expected hour has come. The Allies have crossed the Danube and it is time that we should rise to arms . . . Our brethren in

Bukovina and Transylvania call us to the last battle. Victory is ours. Forward! God is with us."

The armistice of Belgrade makes all our enemies see red. Károlyi's government has opened the door to the Serbians, and the rest of them are breaking it in for themselves; they come aflame with hatred, and come incessantly.

I feel like death, and giddy with rage, when I read Károlyi's speeches. "Confidence is due to the government," says he—and he defends the Socialists: "Let nobody presume to say that they are unpatriotic, that the fate of their country is not dear to their hearts . . ." and the radicals: "In Arad, Minister Jászi has fought to the last gasp for the integrity of Hungarian territory . . ." In short, he defends everybody who does not defend the country.

Among the parties which support the government differences become more manifest every day. They have practically formed two distinct sections, on one side the guilty, misguided Hungarians, on the other, the Socialists and Radicals, the foreign race. The latter are the stronger because they are better organised, and know what they want. Michael Károlyi is entirely under their influence, caught in the meshes of a net that is being drawn rapidly towards the extremist side.

Unity in politics only exists as long as it is a question of attaining power. The power, once attained, itself serves to divide the victors—swollen with pride and insolence. That is the moment to smash them.

"It would be premature," Count Dessewffy told me, when I met him to-day in the street. I had only a short talk with him, for he was due at a meeting. They are forming an agrarian party, and hope to organise the peasant proprietors of the country.

"I have just remembered," he added with a laugh; "only think of it. Károlyi means to send you on a political errand to Italy . . ."

"Does he always choose with such discernment?" I replied, and I could not help laughing myself. "Let him get me a passport and I will use my Italian connections—on two conditions."

"What are they?"

"Firstly, that I travel at my own expense, so that

I needn't accept a penny from them; secondly, that I do not go in the interest of their republic and their government, but exclusively in the interest of my country. But that, I fear, won't suit them."

As I walked on I reflected on what I had heard. Dessewffy had information of the country's mood, and he had said:

"The peasantry and the provincial towns do not take to the idea of this disguised communist republic, suggested by Pest. There are considerable parts of the country which are restrained with difficulty from openly espousing the cause of monarchy."

"Don't hold them down, let them raise their voice and sweep the board of this scum!" I had cried. But Dessewffy only repeated: "It would be premature. Let this crowd die off first."

I ran into a ladder standing across the footpath; a man was sitting on top of it, scraping the wall diligently. Dirt has effaced the last traces of such inscriptions as "By appointment to the Imperial and Royal Court," which October 31st had torn down in its fury. Now new work is being done on the shop-signs, and those that bear names like Hapsburg, Berlin, Hohenzollern, Hindenburg, and Vienna, are taken down. The cafés are in a tearing hurry to alter the names they bore before the war, and the Judaized town sycophantically re-christens itself, plastering its places of amusement with labels such as: Paris Salon, French Café, English Park and American Bar.

I feel the utmost contempt for them, and I'm sure that the foreign invaders, whom fate will bring here, will feel the same towards them. A people which denies, or tolerates that others should deny in its name, its past, tramples on its own honour. For days the government has been announcing the arrival of French troops. The town is being prepared for their reception, and we have to sit down quietly under this hideous farce and suffer it.

One of Károlyi's papers writes to-day: "The first French soldiers will probably arrive to-morrow in Budapest, and the youngest republic greets with love the champions of Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. Instead of stiff, haughty German swashbucklers, charming, good-humoured French officers; instead of the clumsy German soldiers with their heavy boots, our streets will be filled with the petted *poilus* . . . Beside the Hungarian inscriptions we ought to put up French inscriptions everywhere on our public institutions . . . tradespeople should put on their shops: '*Ici on parle français.*' German translations on the bills of fare should be omitted . . ."

A government which prints such shame in its newspapers, a press which can find a single compositor to set it, a public which will stand it, must surely have reached the lowest depths of humiliation.

Flags of the national colours float festively overhead. And the government calls in the French troops of occupation, and offers their commander the most beautiful spot in the country, the royal castle, as a residence, because, it says: "They are not enemies, but gladly welcomed guests . . ."

Every drop of blood in me is boiling with shame and helpless rage, and my mind goes back to a long past page of memory—1871. An early morning in Paris. In close formation, headed by its flags, the victorious German army enters Paris. Along its route the windows are closed, flags of mourning float from the houses, and the still-burning street-lamps are shrouded in crepe; the people, conscious of its dignity even in the moment of its humiliation, observes a gloomy silence in the streets. No order has been given, no instructions have been issued, yet, men, women and children, all turn their heads aside, and the eyes of the victors fail to meet the tear-dimmed eyes, burning with hate, of the vanquished . . .

. . . .

November 22nd.

The sky has descended to the very roofs. Snow falls continually and deepens in the streets. But the Office of Public Health appeals in vain for workmen at twenty crowns a day to remove the snow from the streets. They roar with laughter as they read it, and go on to draw their unemployment dole, while still the snow falls and falls, obstructing the doors of houses, lying knee-deep in the quiet side-streets.

Near the principal railway station it is like wading in a dusty, white, ploughed field, and even in the covered interior of the station one walks on soft ground, for there dirt and decaying garbage accumulate in heaps. Nobody does any cleaning nowadays. There is the unemployment dole!

To-day even the refreshment room is invaded by an insufferable stench, and there are vermin creeping on the walls. The bread given to the wounded is uneatable, and the tea is just slop-water. There is no fire in the stove, and the cold is biting; even during the war the place was never so miserable as it is now. There are fewer wounded, and the place is filled with able-bodied soldiers passing through the town. They come from distant battle-fields, ragged and dirty, and often they only get here to learn that there is no home for them to go to. Nowhere! Serbians, Roumanians and Czechs have occupied the ancient homes of Hungarian peasants.

A Transylvanian Hussar sat on a bench and cursed loudly, sobbing now and then like a child. An old peasant from the Banat, a wounded old soldier, knelt there with tears pouring from his eyes. He was a descendant of those Saxons who had settled in Hungary six hundred years ago, and he exclaimed in his archaic German: "The Serbians have come to us! Oh, our poor country, poor country!" and the sergeant of the medical corps in his red-cockaded cap swore loudly at him.

Then a woman came through the door, dragging two little children by the hand. She asked for bread, they had been three days without food. "I shall go to Károlyi," she cried, "he shall see that justice is done! My husband is an official in the Banat. The Serbians have arrested him. They beat him till he fainted and then locked him up. There are many like that. Those who do not swear allegiance to them are cudgelled and locked up. All the Hungarian administration has disappeared . . . The police have been disarmed too. Then they requisition and don't pay. There are no newspapers—they are confiscated. They call us 'dogs of Hungarians' and say that our land is now in Serbia. There is no post—all the letters addressed to Hungarians are opened, and if they contain money it is taken."

A soldier came close up and listened with open mouth.

"Do you come from the Banat?" the woman

asked. "Then don't you go home! The Serbians are enlisting our men and taking them to forced labour. Nobody comes back from that."

The man looked at her for a while vacantly, then muttered helplessly: "But surely, now there is peace . . ."

Night began to fall. The big chandelier hung unlighted from the ceiling of the dirty hall, save for an isolated side-branch here and there, which scattered an ugly patchy glare in the twilight. On a bench a blind soldier lay on his back; he smiled continually in a queer way, as if the smile were frozen on his face, and his cap was tilted over his sightless eyes.

"You hail from the Great Plain?" I asked him.

"I come from Szalonta . . ." he grumbled sleepily.

And I imagined the poor young fellow, in the stifling summer heat of the Plain, stretched at the foot of a stack for his mid-day rest, shading his eyes from the glaring rays of the sun with his little round hat. But now no sunshine will ever hurt his eyes again, and the soil of a thousand Hungarian harvests is being torn from us. Poor fellow! Does he know that he has sacrificed his young eyes for nought?

A man of the Army Medical Corps came in and told us that some wounded had arrived in the shed. My sister Vera and I took tea and bread. As I went along I overheard a conversation among some soldiers near the wall. Said one: "I put my knife into him with a will; the point came out at his back. The other one escaped." "I did one in too," said a deeper voice. I thought I must be dreaming. I stopped, but could not make out what else was said, as they began to talk in thieves' jargon. "I'll report them . . ." I thought—but I only thought that for a moment, for I saw the sergeant with the red ribbon on his arm, and the pince-nez on his nose, going up to them and shaking hands . . . No, one can't report anyone nowadays. As I went on, the talk became louder behind me. They mentioned a name, but it meant nothing to me; at that moment it was a mere sound, and it was not till much later that I remembered that I had heard it before—Béla Kún. He had been a communist agitator in Russia, who, with several others, had been sent to Hungary by Trotski to work in his interest. It is said that they brought money with them, a lot of money, and it is rumoured that they had something to do with the events of October. More followed them, and though the government knows all about them, still it allows them to cross the border. Trotski, Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, and then this lot—Nets are spread broadcast and tunnels burrowed under-ground. The suburbs of Budapest are haunted by ugly, red-eyed monsters. To-day they still hide in the dark, slink along the walls with drawn-in claws. But to-morrow—who knows?

. . . .

November 23rd.

The dark wall at the station and the voices I heard there followed me into the night, lingered in my thoughts, and were still there in the morning when I woke.

In the evening I mentioned the incident to my mother, and she too had heard of the man called Béla Kún. His real name was Berele Kohn, the son of a Galician Jew who came over the frontier with a pack on his back. He himself had risen to be a journalist and the secretary of the Socialist party in Kolozsvár, from which job he went to the Workman's Benevolent Society. There he stole. The war saved him from prosecution. He was called up, and sent to the Russian front, where he soon managed to surrender. Through his international racial connections he got to Moscow, where he fell in with Trotski, and from then onward carried on his propaganda among prisoners. He became the leader in Russia of the Jewish Communists from Hungary, edited a Hungarian paper called "The Social Revolution," and finally joined a Bolshevist directorate in one of the smaller towns and played his part in the atrocities committed there.

"I heard," my mother said, "that he came back with a lot of Russian money. Károlyi's government does not interfere with him in any way."

"Of course; Károlyi is said to be in communication with Trotski through Diener-Dénes and Landler," I replied.

Károlyi went to Switzerland in the autumn of 1917 with Diener-Dénes and Jászi, who introduced him to Henri Guilbeaux, an extreme syndicalist and defeatist editor, who used his newspaper to work for the same moral dissolution which was carried to power in Russia by Lenin and Trotski. It is said that it was this Guilbeaux who converted Károlyi to the ideas which Béla Kún has now come to represent among us. Later came the congratulatory wire of the Soviet's Workers' and Soldiers' Council, the destructive work of the Radical and Socialist ministers, the confirmation of Pogány's Soldiers' Council and of his system of confidential shop-stewards and the unrestricted freedom of communist agitators . . . These are signs of his guilt, and they are a dark augury for the future.

This is a new milestone which fills us with apprehension, another one of those measures which are meant to undermine the existing Social order.

The great French Revolution was fatally influenced from the day that the people and the rabble of Paris stormed the Arsenal and plundered it. In Budapest no force is required. The Police Commissioner himself has instructed the police and the people's guards to confiscate all arms and ammunition from those who possess no permit—and nowadays permits are only given to workmen and the mob.

That is another breach in the power of resistance of the middle classes and in the sanctity of the home. Henceforth the people's guards have the right to search for arms. The citizens are helpless, and I hear that everywhere people are giving up their shot-guns and revolvers.

We are a pack of spell-bound sleep-walkers. The wizard glares at us with his big, oriental eyes and pronounces his spell, which varies according to the times: Democracy, Socialism. Yesterday the magic word was Liberalism, to-morrow it may be Communism.

. . . .

November 24th.

Nights are sleepless nowadays, yet I cannot work. As if every word of beauty had been engulfed by the mire through which I wade in day time, I cannot

BELA KUN (KOHN).

(To face p. 160.)

form a single idea. In the dreary desert of my brain nothing wanders but horrors: the morning brings them, and they are not banished by the end of the day.

I wrote some letters last night, and this morning I sent out for stamps. The maid put them on the writing table before me.

What is this?—Printed across the portrait of the King, of the Queen, across the picture of the house of Parliament, there is the black surcharge: "Republic." Printed over the beautiful little head of the Queen, "Republic": the word runs across St. Stephen's crown on the King's head!

A thought that has tortured me many times since the 16th of November once again wrings my heart: The crown, our crown . . .

It is not a jewel, it is not an ornament, it is not pomp, it is Hungary itself. Kingdoms have come and gone, but there was no people in this world to whom its crown meant so much as our crown meant to us. The Hungarian crown is every Hungarian soul, every clod of its soil, every Hungarian harvest. With it is torn from the country's head not kingship alone, but all that we have been, all that we may ever be. From century to century the ancient symbol wrought in gold has been preserved in an iron-bound chest up there in the religious gloom of the castle of Buda; within the last thousand years it has only appeared in the light of day fifty-three times, borne on the heads of fifty-three Kings—over the Hungarian land. And once more, when a thousand years had passed, on the day of the Millenium . . . Exposed to the public view, it lay on the altar of the Coronation Church. The people came, I saw them with my own eyes—gray-haired peasants, workmen, lords—and bent the knee in front of it as if before a holy thing. And I saw it on the head of King Charles on a December day, under the ancient walls of regal Buda, amidst the unfurled banners of sixty-three counties, amidst deafening cheers, amidst the sound of our great, clear, national anthem.

Traitors and *sans-patries* have torn St. Stephen's crown from its place with sacrilegious hands. That crown was not only a King's head-dress. Like a golden hoop it welded together the giant range of the Carpathians, Transylvania, the blue gulf of Adria, Croatia and Slavonia—the whole realm of the Great Plain, the country which formed the most perfect geographical unit in Europe. And now that the golden hoop holds it together no longer, that which has been united since the beginning of time falls to pieces and to ruins.

I was gripped by a maddening fear and began to tremble with apprehension for the crown, as if it were something more living than life itself. I felt that we only existed as long as it existed, that its destruction would make our destruction inevitable. What do they plot, these present despots of ours, who hate everything that connects us with our past? It is not Károlyi who will stop them: as far as he is concerned they can do what they like with the crown.

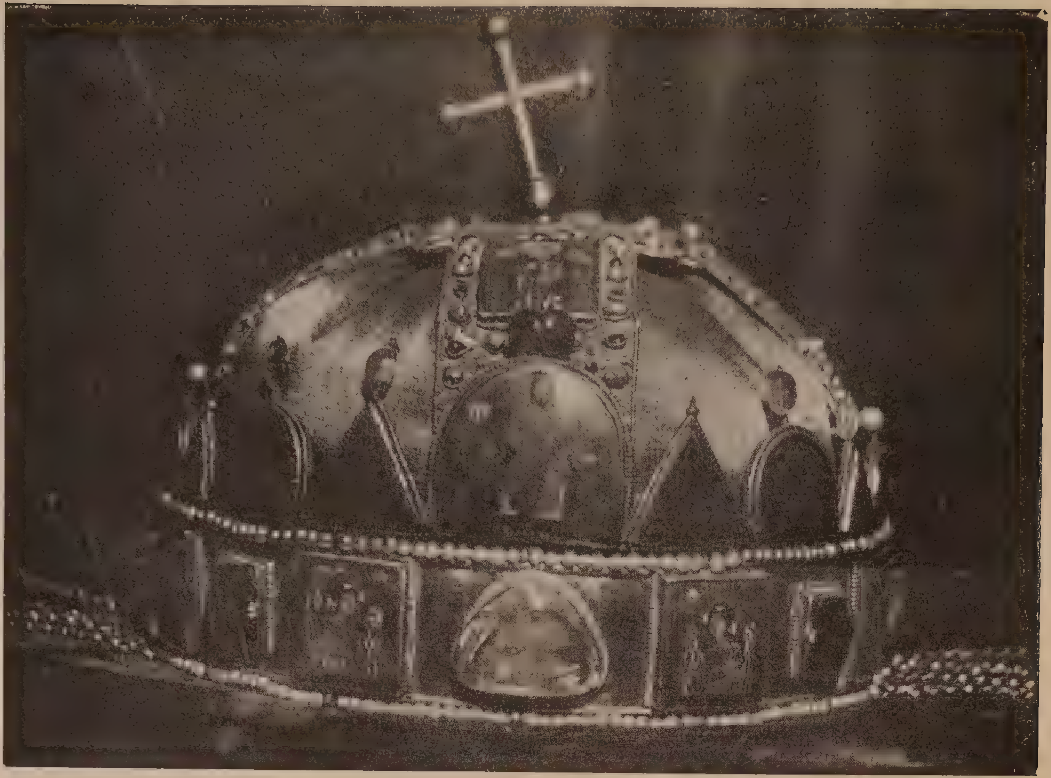
A few days ago Count Ambrózy, the Keeper of the Crown Jewels, went to Michael Károlyi's house and asked for admittance. Károlyi was lunching with Count Pejacsevich when the butler announced that the Keeper of the Crown Jewels was waiting.

"Let him wait," said Károlyi. "I am lunching," and continued his meal undisturbed. After a time he was told again that Count Ambrózy wanted to see him urgently, as he had to leave town. Károlyi, to whom Kéri, Jászi and Pogány are admitted at all hours, sent a message to the first grandee of Hungary, to wait. He lit his cigar and sipped his coffee. About half an hour later the Keeper of the Crown Jewels sent another message.

"If he cannot wait, let him go," said Károlyi. Count Pejacsevich implored him. At last he gave in. "All right, I'll settle with him in two minutes."

He went out, cigar in mouth, and two minutes later was back again. "Settled," he said laughing. "Ambrózy came to ask me what should be done with the crown. I told him: take it to a bank, or put it into your pocket, I don't care . . ."

And I seemed to see again the mystic dusk of the Coronation Church, its pillars and arches, and there in front of the altar, set on purple velvet, the pale gold of the Crown . . . I see the gray head of an aged peasant whose sharp Turanian features seem as if cut out with a chisel from the gloom of the church;



ST. STEPHEN'S CROWN

the head bows, and his horny hand makes the sign of the cross on his breast.

. . . .

November 25th.

My mother brought a porcelain figure into the room to-day. "It is broken," she said, and put the Sévres shepherd and his tiny broken hand on the table. Its beauty filled me for a moment with extraordinary rapture: doubtless it appeared so lovely to me because nowadays everything we see is so very ugly and depressing.

"Of course I know it's going to stay here with you for the winter," my mother said with a slight reproach in her voice, reminding me of the many small commissions I forgot from time to time.

"I'll take it at once . . ." I said.

"There is no need for that; there is plenty of time if you are otherwise engaged."

At that moment I felt I had no other task in the whole world but her little porcelain figure. I said goodbye and went.

It was getting dark. Here and there the sparsely subdued glimmer of the gas-lamps made a pretence of lighting the streets; dust-bins full of garbage stood in front of the houses, but nobody could be found to cart them away. The air was saturated with an acid, unwholesome smell, which fostered the epidemic that had raged in the town for weeks, creeping in through filthy entrances, climbing the dirty stairs, and, in the chill of fireless houses, laying its hand on the heart of the inhabitants.

When I reached the little street I wanted it was practically in darkness. Only the shop windows cast square patches of yellow light on the footpath. I entered a little shop in one of whose mean windows some old china was displayed. The shelves, the tables, every available space was filled with broken china, and the repairer sat among the débris, with his hat on his head and in his winter coat, looking for all the world like a picture by a Dutch master. He had noble features, and his white beard covered his chest, and on his first finger he wore an old ring with a coat of arms . . . One day when I had gone there he had told me that he came of a county family. He had owned land, and a nice house with a pillared court, under the shade of old trees; he used to drive a four-in-hand and to collect china as a hobby. Somehow the land, the house, the horses disappeared; so did his collection, and the only thing that was left to him was the art of repairing broken porcelain by which he now eked out a sort of living.

When I had finished my business with him I did not go straight home. One street after another seemed to call to me, and I walked on thinking sadly of that old Hungarian's fate. Shop after shop I passed, all with Jewish names—marine stores, crockery-shops, tallow-chandlers, small bazaars. A few years ago their owners had lived in Galicia, and all of a sudden they had appeared in the streets of Pest selling boot-laces. They had never shouldered a hod, never carried bricks, never followed the plough, but made money without hard work, by buying and selling; now they had their shop, the cradle of millions. They start their careers in the narrow streets in which our own folk end theirs.

Somehow I had wandered into the crowded quarters of Budapest's ghetto. These streets had been fixed by nobody as the abode of the invading Jews. The times have passed long ago when a Jew was not allowed to stay a night either in Buda or in Pest, and when he could own neither house nor shop. In fifty years they have conquered the town, and yet they have formed for themselves a little ghetto of their very own. They have invaded whole streets, occupying tenement-houses, in which they can live amongst themselves. The newly built streets and houses soon became filthy, and the entrances vomited the same odour which I have smelt in the ghettoes of Amsterdam, Rome and Venice.

As I looked up I felt as if I were in a foreign town whose houses were silently conspiring in the dark above the lighted shops. I had never noticed it before, but there seemed to be here a secret, antagonistic life which had nothing in common with ours, from which we were excluded. The mask was dropped and the character of the streets became visible. The sense of security of this foreign race had increased to such an extent that it forgot to hide itself. It had been dissembling for a good while, though, and we had lived here, and had heard and seen nothing. We did not trouble about the course of events, and while they clasped hands fanatically, from the gin shops at the village end, from tenement-houses, editorial offices, shops, banks and palaces, over five continents, we forsaken Hungarians could not hold together even in our own little country.

Some of us begin to see clearly to-day, though what is happening now happened yesterday too—then in secretive darkness, now in open daylight. The immigrants have effaced the features of our race from the land, have dug out our souls from our national affairs and substituted their faces, their soul. This evil work has been going on for a long time.

The people who came from foreign lands were foreign to us only, but not to the people of the ghetto. They whispered things we did not hear, went to the ghetto of some other town, whispered again, and again went on and on. Trotski had been in Budapest—he had lived here years ago. Others came too, people whose co-religionists alone knew what they were after. We only saw worms that cringed, we never listened to what they said to each other.

I felt as if the whole quarter were speaking, as if every house, every street in it were quoting from the ancient book of its inhabitants: "A people which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear and hear not."

My wandering eyes were suddenly arrested by the sight of three men. One had the features of a negro, the second a heavy, fat face, and the third was quite small, with red eyelids and white eyelashes. Their heads were close together. When I stopped in front of a shop window and pretended to look at its contents they stopped talking, and I saw by the reflection in the window that they looked at me, nodded at one another and moved on. Two others, clad in gabardines, came towards me. They wore fur caps and gesticulated violently with dirty hands raised to the level of their shoulders. One was speaking; the other listened with his eyes fixed on the ground and with dirty fingers caught hold of the lock dangling from the side of his head and drew it out straight to his chin. He stood like that for a time, reflectively, and occasionally mumbled a word. Then, noticing that I was looking at him, he stopped in the middle of a word and let his lock go; it curled up to his ear like a spring. Then they too went on.

King Street swarmed around me. Unkempt, fat women stood in the doorways, silk dresses rustled on the pathway, and the smell of filth mingled with that of cheap scent. Children shrieked. From the entrances of restaurants with Hebrew names the reek of garlic spread into the street. The doors of small shops opened and closed continually, and the articles suspended on them swung about; chains and watches rattled against the panes, stockings and ribbons fluttered to and fro, and the medley of badly lit windows displayed old clothes, confectionery, plucked geese, jewellery, boots. A woman passed, pushing along a perambulator laden with soap. On the street corner a bandy-legged little monster in a gabardine sold figs and blinked with his dull eyes at the passers-by. A red-bearded man stopped near him. They spoke fast and their lips moved as if they had gulped down some burning hot mouthfuls of something. As I approached them the red-bearded one turned abruptly round and slipped into a goldsmith's shop. I looked after him . . . A quaint old watch was hanging in the shop-window. I wondered what they wanted for it.

The chains hanging from the entrance door tinkled as I went in. A shaded lamp hung from the smoky ceiling low above the glazed counter, in which rings and ear-rings were displayed on velvet cushions. Several people were standing in a corner, but as soon as they saw me they retired to the back of the shop. Only a fat flabby girl remained, and as she asked me what I wanted she fingered her untidy black hair, and scratched herself. Meanwhile she watched the door, and when it opened bent quickly over the counter and pointed with her grimy thumb over her shoulder. A well-dressed man in a fur coat, and with a typical face, passed behind me and joined the others. Then a sailor came in and he too was called in to join the group. Many voices whispered mysteriously in the room at the back of the shop. I listened attentively, straining my ears to hear something, one sentence, of all this talk which was not meant for us and was only mentioned among themselves—but I could not understand a word . . .

"I am afraid it won't do," I said to the girl, and hurried out of the shop in disgust.

I walked fast, almost running through the crowd, as if I were escaping the meshes of a conspiracy which floated in the air but which one could not grasp, because as soon as one touched it it fell to pieces like slime.

The whole quarter was on the look-out for some prey. Its streets were haunted by some premeditated crime. In its houses a greedy monster, which has never shut its eyes for a thousand years, kept vigil.

Away from here, into the fresh air! I was haunted by the thought of the room in the little shop, the whispering Jews, Russian money on the table; of the sergeant with his golden pince-nez, who had mentioned the name of Béla Kún to the soldiers; of the faces of Jászi, Kunfi and Louis Hatvany; of the bandy-legged monster at the street corner, the man with the red beard and the flabby girl . . . They are all after the same thing and are helping each other all they can, while we have lost the power of wanting anything at all . . . .

That night I wrote an appeal to the women of Hungary. Women! sleep not, or your children will have no place to lay their heads . . .

. . . .

November 26th.

In the afternoon I walked towards the boulevards.

Countess Louis Batthyany had telephoned that she wanted to see me. I made my way through a dense crowd, for the town is overrun by the constant influx of refugees and of thousands of home-coming soldiers. On the boulevards people thronged; there hardly seemed to be enough room for them. The human tide overflowed into the by-streets, pushed, pressed, swarmed and accumulated in front of the windows of newspaper offices like a knotted muscle. In the office window of an evening newspaper were some photographs, and under one of them was an inscription, "The members of the Soldiers' Council." There were too many people for me to get near, so that I could only see it at a distance as I passed —the faces, exhibited in glory, of those who were guilty of the rebellion of October, and who may one day be called to account.

"What do you think of that?" a voice asked among the loiterers. "The Minister for War has had Heltai arrested for embezzlement, robbery and murder." "What ? the ex-commander of the town ?" "That's him . . . and now his sailors are coming in armoured cars with machine-guns to rescue him. There's going to be trouble." The news spread at once. "Have you heard it?" "It is not true?" "But it is!" There was a panic. And the people in the streets carried it on with them: "The sailors are coming! They have left Pressburg, they have left the Czechs . . ."

Crowded electric trams passed, so crammed with people that the pressure inside nearly broke the cars' sides; outside people were hanging on everywhere. I saw some soldiers coming along, when suddenly one of them tumbled forward, tripped over his own foot and fell, face downward, on the pavement. Nobody troubled about him and even his companions went on indifferently. With a remnant of war-time charity I stooped over him, thinking that perhaps he had an artificial leg, or was suffering from an epileptic fit. When I took hold of his arm to help him to get up again, however, I found that he was drunk and vomiting. As I started back I heard his companions roar with laughter.

The crowd carried me on, but the incident was like a thorn thrust into one's heart. Soldiers, Hungarian soldiers! There had been a time when my eyes filled with tears at the sight of them. How proud I had felt of them, how I had respected them, I had loved them as being the personified courage of my race. What are they now . . . ?

When I arrived at my friend's house I found the talk turning on Michael Károlyi, to whom several of those present were related. I asked them if they knew the conditions of the armistice concluded with Diaz, that they had safeguarded the frontiers of the country, which the Belgrade treaty had sacrificed? The news was so mad, so impossible, that doubt showed in every eye.

"I know it for certain," I said; "a member of the armistice commission, Lieut.-Colonel Julier, told my brother so."

Anger succeeded consternation on every face.

"Get me the text," Count Julius Batthyany shouted, "and I will have the two documents posted up, side by side, and within twenty-four hours the whole government will collapse."

His beautiful mother looked at him doubtfully:

"Do you imagine that there is so much liberty left in this town? The posters would be torn to shreds before they could be stuck on the walls."

"They promised us the freedom of the press and of opinions, and we get nothing but lies."

"Let us organise against them. That is the only way to defeat their lies," said Countess Batthyany, "it was with that intent that I asked you to come."

"You are thinking of the women?"

"Yes . . ."

"I have thought of them too," I said. "There are several of us who think the same. We must find some common-place programme to hide our real purpose: women alone can rebuild the lost faith."

"Work out the programme and take the leadership of the movement."

"I don't want to be anything but a common soldier," I answered; "I am only an author and know nothing of these things."

"For all that you will have to do it. Your lead will be followed. I want to work too."

I shook my head. I was ready to do anything, but did not feel the vocation for leadership.

"We will try too," said Count Batthyany. "Somehow we must succeed in getting rid of this crowd."

"We will talk it all over," said his mother.

So she is with us too, I pondered when leaving. She, the aunt of both Count Michael and Countess Károlyi! How many of us felt the same thing! It seemed to be floating in the air, and waiting for someone among us to put it into words.

The street had changed while I had been in the house. No lamps were burning, the trams were not running, and the snow was falling heavily. Had a strike broken out suddenly? Was the supply of coal exhausted? Or was it because of Heltai's sailors?

The little side-streets gaped dismally in the dark. A ramshackle cab trotted through the snow.

"How much to Stonemason Street?" I asked.

"Sixty crowns," the driver answered from his seat.

"Not so long ago it would have been two crowns . . ."

He drove on, cursing me, and I went on, ploughing my way through the snow. There was an uncanny silence about the place. Out in the country the silence of the woods and meadows is that of rest, while here in town silence seems to be the preliminary of some hidden attack. That was what it felt like now. Against my will I was looking behind me all the time, and I hurried as fast as I could across the entrances of the alleys.

The bright, clean streets, policemen, protection, security of the past—where have they all gone?

Civilisation was only a scaffolding which was covered with paper posters so that we should not see that there was no building behind it, and it has collapsed at a single blow. It is a wreck, and wolves prowl over the abandoned ground. The town has slipped suddenly back to the times when nobody who started on an errand at night knew if he would ever see home again.

At the next corner a cab turned out into the boulevard and I felt a little safer. But I did not enjoy the sight of the cab for very long. Two soldiers emerged from a doorway and ran after it, shouting loudly. The driver made signs that he had passengers, but stopped out of fear that they might shoot him. The soldiers didn't trouble to discuss the matter, but simply opened the door of the cab, kicked the passenger out of it, and took his place. The cab, as if driving into a white veil, disappeared rapidly in the falling snow. The street became lonely and quiet. Only the snow glittered, and even as the flakes drifted into my face I decided that after all in these days it was wiser to walk . . .

CHAPTER XI.

November 27th.

After all this humiliation, shameful submission and silence entire districts of the country are raising their voices in protest.

The Széklers in Transylvania have risen; the flag of the Székler's corps has been unfurled, and Count Stephen Bethlen has organised a Székler National Council. Transylvania is graven on his heart and he has remained faithful to himself. He has always sacrificed everything to the good of the country. It is encouraging to hear his name in these times when everybody thinks only of himself. And after Transylvania, Upper Hungary raises its voice, the towns of Zips, Zemplén and our faithful brethren the Slovaks, whom neither gold nor the lash will persuade that they belong to the Czechs. The Bunyevats swear to stick to their fatherland and so do the Catholic Serbians; and far away in the North the Ruthenians, Rákoczi's own folk, that *gens fidelissima et carissima*, protest violently—they, who live precariously in the depths of the Carpathians, on the road by which the Galician Jews invade us. I know their poor little villages, pounced upon by the army of leeches in gabardines, bloodthirsty, insatiable, on its westward march. That is the road by which, for decades, the Polish and Russian Jews have come to us; they cut off their payés, side-locks, in Kassa, throw off their gabardines in Miskolocz and become barons and millionaires in Budapest.

Successive Hungarian Governments have left the Ruthenians of the frontier undefended against this invading horde, and yet these pious people have remained, for all their poverty, patient and faithful to us. And now they stand by our side, desperately; they don't ask for autonomy, they want no special privileges, they just want to remain one with us, because we have never harmed them. Neither the propaganda of the Ukrainians and Russian Imperialists, nor the schismatical attempts at their conversion, nor anything else has had any effect on them. They are clamouring for Hungarian schools, while a foreign race speaking in the name of Budapest denies them their very nationality; and their Bishop, Andrew Szabó, sends the following message in their name: "There is no need of a declaration of loyalty on the part of Hungary's Ruthenians, because this people has never faltered."

But this does not suit Mr. Jászi, the Minister for Nationalities. He wants to transform our great geographical unit into a sort of Eastern Switzerland, and he has invented a new name, Ruszka-Krajna, for the green counties of whispering woods, the ancient part of Hungary inhabited by the Ruthenians.

There he stands, in the midst of a poisoned town, the son of Russo-Polish Jews, declaiming, with all the destructive vigour of his race, separatist theories against associations made by nature itself, forgetting that, while in Switzerland the extreme branches of three races join in a common summit, in Hungary the peoples' streams flow into a common basin, the strength and soul of which must always be the Hungarian people.

And while he holds forth, and declares that in a single moment he is going to efface the history of a thousand years, these thousand years of Hungarian history shout from every side in desperate protest. Széklers, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Germans and Catholic Serbians clamour like suffering brethren, appealing to each other over the indifference shown by a muzzled land. The voices of their anguish come like a storm down the mountains and join over the Great Plain under the November sky in a harmony that knows no discord. And the winds on their myriad wings carry the sad appeal on and on, and sow it as a seed for the future from which, one day, we shall gather a rich harvest of revenge.

. . . .

November 28th.

The protests from our outposts have died away and the tragic ray of light has been swallowed up in the general gloom. As long as the despoilers of the nation are in power it will always be like that. The Government has given millions to the Transylvanian Roumanians and has supplied them with a profusion of arms, taken from Hungarian soldiers, while it leaves the Hungarians and Széklers in sweating terror, defenceless in the midst of an enemy that clamours for their lives.

Károlyi's Government supports everybody who is against us. To-day, for instance, while I was on duty at the railway station, I saw special trains being put together with feverish haste. Roumanian agitators are calling together in Gyulafehérvár a Roumanian National assembly which intends, it is said, to declare for the separation of many purely Hungarian counties of Transylvania. And to facilitate the business the Hungarian Government puts special trains at the disposal of our enemies! The whole thing is as though someone were grinning maliciously over a body writhing in agony.

There was great activity at the station to-day. The old refreshment shed of the Red Cross has been transformed into a refreshment room for returning soldiers. We who had for many years worked there with the Red Cross offered our services in vain. White bread, which we had not seen for a long time, and sausages, were distributed to the soldiers by Jewesses who wore neither hat nor cap and looked unkempt and untidy. They had been sent by the Social Democratic party, and care for the soldiers was only a secondary part of their duty: they distributed handbills and talked propaganda to the returning men. Notwithstanding our Red Cross and our papers one of the women came up to us and asked us to leave the place, as they had been put in charge of it.

With my sister and a friend we went back to the other refreshment room. "We have been kicked out," I reported. We were now told that the Government, after having dismissed those who had directed the work of the Red Cross during the war, had appointed Countess Michael Károlyi to the head of the Red Cross—as Delegate of the Government. This position had always been filled gratuitously by grey-haired noblemen, but now Countess Károlyi voted herself a salary of eighty thousand crowns and had it paid out to her for a year in advance.

"One of her assistants has already been here," said someone belonging to the Red Cross. "She made a great fuss and declared that Countess Károlyi would turn out all the ladies who had formerly done the work."

"It will be a noble sight," I said; "I shall stay and see it through."

At this moment the sergeant with the red ribbon came in. Two soldiers with fixed bayonets followed him. They came straight up to me. "We have found some suspicious leaflets on the platform, royalist muck . . ."

"I don't know anything about any leaflets," I answered, delighted to hear that some had at last made their appearance.

"The scent leads here," the sergeant said threateningly, "it is said they are distributed here."

"Search me," I said, and turned out the pockets of my white apron. But I was too happy to dissemble: I laughed heartily.

. . . .

November 29th.

I stood in front of the cashier's little glass cage, leaning my elbows on the cool marble slab. There were only a few people coming and going in the big offices of the bank; a few servant girls sat about with their deposit-books in their hands.

"How's business in these days?" I asked the cashier as he pushed my money over the counter.

"We have never been like this before. War-time was a perfect golden age in comparison." He leant toward me and spoke in a whisper. "The Jews are exploiting the country and the Government shamelessly. The salary of a minister used to be twelve thousand crowns. The ministers of the popular Government have allotted themselves two hundred thousand and have had it paid out for a year in advance. For overtime, they take one hundred and sixty crowns an hour. The number of Ministers and Government delegates increases every day. There are forty Secretaries of State running about Budapest. Every radical journalist wants to be at least a Secretary of State. Treasury notes are printed as fast as posters. It is said that the popular Government has spent three milliards in a month—twice as much as the most expensive month of the war. This peace is an expensive thing, and one can't say that the republic is exactly cheap. We are racing towards bankruptcy. Many people are taking their money to Switzerland . . ."

"What I possess shall remain here. If the country is ruined, we Hungarians will be ruined with it, at any rate."

"It is wise to take precautions however," the cashier said. "It is rumoured that all gold and silver is to be commandeered."

On my way home his last words kept coming to my mind. Among our old family papers there is a little scrap of a document dated 1848, addressed to my grandfather, Charles Tormay; it is a receipt for the silver he had delivered to the mint to cover the issue of Kossuth's banknotes. My father once told me how on a certain day all the silver was heaped up on the dining-room table. He was a little boy at the time, and asked how he would be able to stir the sugar in his coffee if all the spoons were taken away? "With a wooden spoon," his mother said. My father could not bear the idea of that, so he hung about the silver till he managed to steal a little spoon. Everything else was melted down, and that little spoon is the only thing that remains of our old family silver.

They gave it, and we would give it, but not to this crowd. I wouldn't eat with a wooden spoon for the sake of the entire government.

. . . .

November 30th.

A yellow fog has descended on the town. The houses have disappeared in it, and the rooms are dark, as if the windows were covered outside with mud-coloured blinds. Though it is forenoon, the lamps are burning in the houses, as if a corpse were laid out in every room in the town. I never saw a fog like this. It looks the very picture of our lives.

Fog . . . clinging, dense fog. People choke as they walk, in an accursed land; they slip about in the sticky, heavy mud, and can neither halt nor run. A doomed city is our prison. The hearths are cold, we have no light, and all the doors are shut. Streets end in darkness, and at the street corners cold blasts strike one, coming no one knows whence. One cannot escape it. One has to go on, under dark windows, through the fog, across deadly alleys. Nobody looks out of the houses, and there is no sign of life about. The air seems to be a sloppy glue closing suddenly over one's mouth like a horrible, gigantic hand, and stopping one's breath. We shudder with discomfort and misery, and if we try to lay hold of something solid, the walls recede before our groping hands, and the doors move like ghosts. They are not locked, just ajar, and they open noiselessly inward. Behind them somebody stands and waits, waits with open eyes in the dark, conscious of some awful news impending : Hungary has lost something again . . . In the next street, in all the streets about us, red ferocious beasts are lurking with soft noiseless steps, ready to pounce . . .

That is our present life. Fog, yellow, clinging fog, in which the town, with all its streets and houses, glides on mud towards a bottomless abyss.

Day by day more cockades of the national colours disappear from the soldiers' caps, and as each one disappears it leaves a wound : a spot of blood . . . red buttons take their place. In one of the main streets yesterday a red flag was displayed on a house. In the northern suburbs communists meet in shady little inns, and in the streets foreign-looking men harangue chance crowds from dust-bins or the tops of hand-carts. With sweeping gestures they declare : "Everything is yours ! Take everything !"

These words are all over the town to-day, and Károlyi's Government says it all the time, in every one of its declarations : "Everything is yours !" It says it to socialists, communists, radicals, Czechs, Roumanians, Serbians . . .

Having begun with the Roumanians, Jászi now takes counsel with the Slovaks; and while the

A COMMUNIST ORATOR.

(To face p. 176.)

Czechs' troops descend, unhindered, into the valley of the Vág, and occupy town after town, the precious springs of Pöstyén among others, Jászi, Diener-Dénes and a fellow called Braun hand over to them our thousand-year-old rights. Jászi has already presented them with five Hungarian counties and offers a common administration for ten more. He bargains, humbles himself, and libels our rule of a thousand years. And even while he was shamefully giving up everything, and stupidly betraying the Government's hopeless inability to act, it turns out that the whole of the negotiations were nothing but a trap. After having surveyed the situation here, Prag has informed Budapest officially: "No negotiations whatever with the Hungarian Government have been authorised by the Czecho-Slovak Republic . . ."

Such are our rulers. They sell us over and over again every day. What I was told in whispers is now admitted by the Government itself, because Vlad, the leader of the Roumanian guards in Transylvania, has given the show away. To display his strength and power, he told the unfortunate Hungarian inhabitants of Transylvania: "The Roumanian guards have received from the Hungarian Government ten million crowns and fifty-five thousand infantry equipments." Now even the deaf can hear what the Government does with the arms it has filched from our soldiers, who, notwithstanding their disbandment, were anxious to defend the soil of their country. It gives the arms of Hungarian soldiers to Roumanians, while it collects the weapons of Hungarian citizens for the benefit of ruffians, escaped convicts and vagabond deserters.

The eternally harassing question: what is going on? has ceased to worry me. Now I know that everything that happens is barefaced treason, unlike any thing that has ever happened in my people's history. The clauses of a secret red treaty dictate every purpose, every action, and its stipulations influence everything that has happened in Hungary since the 31st of October.

. . . .

December 1st.

Once upon a time December meant something lovely, glittering, cold, white, and the warmth of bright fires. Now its whiteness is death, its cold is torture, and everywhere the fires are out.

The cold at night is awful. Its breath penetrates into the rooms, and terrifies one. When the maid told us this morning that there was no coal left in the cellar, I could not believe her. I took a candle and went down the winding staircase into the dark. The coal dust crackled under my feet and the light of the candle flickered to and fro on the cobwebbed wall. The cellar was empty; only a few logs of wood were lying in a corner. It was some time before I realised what that emptiness meant. I did not move, but just stood rooted to the spot while my breath steamed in the candle-light.

We had received our coal-permit eight months before, and were sent by the coal-office to a big coal merchant. Week after week passed and we got no coal. I wrote, sent messages, went myself at last. On the stairs of the building misery and cold were thronging patiently, and sad-looking people were loafing about in the office. I had to wait as though in the anteroom of a minister. Now and then the lady secretary called one of us by name. Jewesses in fur coats and with diamond earrings were standing behind me and laughing among themselves. They had come after me, yet they were admitted before me. Beside me a poor woman in a shawl was waiting and a gentleman in a shabby coat which had seen better days. The woman complained quietly: for days she had been unable to cook because she had no fuel. The gentleman, a judge in a high position, said that his children could not get out of bed, but had remained there for over a week, because their rooms were so cold.

We waited patiently for hours. Noon passed. The secretary looked at her watch and said aggressively: "Too late, come to-morrow!"

"But here is my coal-permit! I got it in April." The spirit of rebellion rose in me. I felt for the others too, for all of us who waited there, Hungarians, who no longer had any voice in anything.

The coal merchant, the secretary, both were Jews. These people have usurped every office and they put off from one day to another what is due to us, or throw it at our heads as if it were a charity. To-morrow! With clenched fists I went the next day, and the day after . . . Patient women, weeping old grannies, pushing, angry men. The coal merchant crossed the ante-room quickly, and imploring voices tried to catch his attention. But he answered back like a dictator deciding a question of grace: "Wait your turn!"

Again I went, and befurred and bejewelled women came down as I went up, gloating over their success. I heard what they said—*they* had got what they wanted; and everywhere it is the same. With the impotence of a subdued race we go away empty-handed, and there is no place where we can assert our rights. They have the power, and they laugh in our faces.

And the coal in our cellar has been used up and we live in unwarmed rooms.

. . . .

December 2nd.

The morning was still dark when the ringing of a bell broke in upon my dreams. It worried me, floated over my head like the buzzing of a bluebottle, stopped, and started again. I woke.

It was the telephone in the ante-room.

"The farmer? Oh yes, near our villa! Last night burglars entered the villa . . . my sister's too! I understand . . ."

At the police station I received but cold comfort.

"I don't see what good it can do to take your complaints down," said a little man who seemed to be a clerk. "Last night sixteen villas were pillaged on one hill alone. As for the town, God alone knows how many houses and shops have been visited by burglars. We can't go into such matters. Where could we find enough detectives, when those we have already have other irons in the fire?"

"They are searching for counter-revolutionists," said a gentleman, whose flat had been burgled last night too. "Robbery is free in this country nowadays."

I was sent from the ground-floor to the second, and thence to the ground-floor again. I wandered through stuffy corridors from one untidy office, smelling of ink, to another, and at last I was promised that inquiries would be made.

Here too everything had changed. New men had replaced the old Hungarian officials in the police-force. They had got this into their hands too.

The north wind blew sharply across the bridge, bringing a promise of snow. Like giants' brides, the white hills of Buda stood up against the cold wintry sky, and on them the bare trees cast shadows like blue veins over the sunlit snow. Everything glittered. For a moment the beauty of it thrust the town, the trouble, and the burgled house into the background. On the way I met my sister Mary. She too was coming from the police station and had two constables with her. The crown had been removed from the cap of one of them, the other still wore it.

" So you have not taken it off?" said I.

" Kings may come and kings may go, but the holy crown will remain in its place," he answered.

" Are you very busy?" I asked, to change the subject.

" It would not do for things to remain as they are."

" After all, it was the adherence of the police that settled the matter," I retorted.

The two men looked at each other, but said nothing. Meanwhile we reached the house. The snow on the roof glittered against the blue sky. On the ground there were footmarks in the snow, which led to the terrace. It was obvious that the burglars had climbed the creepers on the wall and had entered the house in that way. In nearly every room a kitchen-knife was lying on the table with its handle standing out beyond the edge, so as to be easy to catch hold of, had the intruders been disturbed. In the hall a lot of things were tied up in a bundle.

" They intended to come back," said one of the policemen.

The cupboards were open, and a lot of things had been taken away, while the floor was littered with things they had rejected when they were making their choice. The red, white and green flag was torn from its staff and bore the marks of heavy, muddy boots. The big Bible, as if shot through the heart, had a bullet hole through it.

"There are clues enough for me," I said to my sister. "I have already found the culprits: the products of the revolution have been visiting us."

The constables looked at each other.

When I got home I told my mother what had happened. She listened to me with a stern face, in silence.

"They carried away whatever they could. They even stripped the mattresses. They scribbled filth on the walls."

"These times levy toll on everybody," said she. "What about those who are driven from their homes, whose houses are burnt down, who are murdered? If only fate will be satisfied with this and ask no more from us, if this is all we have to pay, we shall have no reason to complain." And she did not mention the matter again.

The evening papers were brought in. One name dominated them all: Gyulafehérvár . . . In the town where John Hunyádi, the Hungarian paladin of Christendom against the Turks, lies buried, over his grave, on the field at the foot of the castle, the Roumanian Irredenta under the name of "Roumanian National Council" has carried a resolution: "Transylvania, the Banat and all the territories of Hungary inhabited by Roumanians are united with Roumania!" . . . This happened in Gyulafehérvár, and Károlyi's Government sent the Roumanians by special train to this assembly of treason! He even armed a bodyguard for them, and has given them millions!

Once more life seems like the dream of a demented brain. "Everything is yours," says the Government, so that it may take what the robbers cannot carry off. They share and share alike, and what care they that in making their division they break our hearts? The Hungarian population of Transylvania, abandoned, humiliated, betrayed, must tolerate that its ancient land should be thrown by Budapest to an uneducated, newly-risen Balkan state, whose shepherd folk, fleeing from the cruelty of its own princes, came to Hungary asking for hospitality, a few hundred years ago. The Széklers have lived for fifteen hundred years in Transylvania, and the semi-barbarous Roumanian people now laugh in the face of the original inhabitants, and by right of robbery declare that what was always ours is now their own.

The street is quiet. The town listens with a stony heart. The stars alone tremble above the roofs as if a great sob rose to them *de profundis*.

. . . .

December 3rd.

I went to Buda, to the Castle Hill. We had a meeting at five at Count Zichy's palace.

This house was built in the eighteenth century and is one of Buda's finest palaces. Maria Theresa, powdered and bewigged, once lived here, and her presence still seems to linger about the walls. The stone staircase rises loftily to the hall on the first floor, whose low, decorated roof is supported by white pillars. On the white walls glittered the gilt frames of old pictures.

The lamp had not yet been lit, but a fire was burning in the wide marble fireplace and shed its light around from below. It shone back from the beauty of ancient bronzes, ran over the walls, and under its flickering touch far-off Chinese springtimes came to life on the old porcelain, and then melted again into the gloom, suddenly, as the flicker passed by. The tall furniture stood haughty and clumsy, conscious of the fact that it had always been there.

When the lamp was lit others came in, shivering, and we all gathered round the fire like conspirators, for we all suffered the same pangs, we all wanted the same thing. We knew that the hour had come, that we had to call out the women from behind their locked doors. In the history of Hungary women have not often appeared. They have never had to fight for their rights, because there is no code in the world which protects the rights of woman so well as ours did—even in the darker centuries. They could live quietly in those days, and the handsome narrow faces of Hungarian women shone only in the mild light of the home fire. Those were Hungary's happy days. But when the land was afire and misery was reaping its harvest, then the Hungarian women rose to the occasion and stood in the fore-front of the fight. Our country has never suffered greater distress than now, and, as we sat there, we all knew that the women would respond to our call and would sow the seed of the counter-revolution. Not at meetings, not in the market-place, but in their homes, in the souls of their men exhausted by the hardships of war, men who are down-hearted to-day but who, to-morrow, will not dare to give the lie to the women who believe in their courage . . .

I read the draft of the programme in which, hidden among social and political reforms, I had attempted to sum up the vital needs of the whole womanhood of Christian Hungary.

"Let us set forth clearly what we want," said Countess Raphael Zichy. All agreed, and at the head of the programme we stated, clearly and tersely, the Holy Trinity for which we meant to stand: a Christian and patriotic policy, the integrity of the country, and the sanctity of the family.

"I do not doubt the result," said Prince Hohenlohe; "I have done much organising in Transylvania, and I know what women can do."

When we left and dispersed in the quiet streets of Buda, I felt that I had entered on a new path, which might become my path of destiny.

. . . .

December 4th to 7th.

Henceforth life took on a new aspect. I shook off the paralysis of despair which had made me a passive sufferer of events. Till now, like a cripple deprived of the power of movement, I had brooded deeply over everything that came within my ken, but at last I had become an actor in deadly earnest in the tragedy, and I could waste no more time over details.

The day after the meeting in the Zichy Palace I wrote letters, telephoned and called to my side a few brave, energetic women. We had no time to waste, and we decided that each of my guests should invite to her own home her reliable women friends, and that we should address them, so that they in their turn might spread the idea of the organisation of Christian Hungarian women. There was no other solution, for the Press had ceased to be free. The few Christian and middle-class papers which would otherwise have been at our disposal had begun to be terrorised by red soldiers. Our ideals had been condemned to death by the Social Democrats; they had declared war against patriotism and Christianity. As for the integrity of Hungary's soil, they had declared in their official paper that it was no business of theirs . . .

We had perforce to return to the primitive means of olden times. The idea was spread by word of mouth, and we separated so as to be able to do more work. Emma Ritoók visited one end of the town and I the other. Like the primitive Christians, women gathered now here, now there. I visited dingy lodgings, baronial halls, schoolrooms; through dark streets, in the gloom of hostile alleys, I walked in snow and wind day after day. Women understood me, and their souls glowed with courage and decision in these sad times of exhaustion and resignation. With very few exceptions they signed my lists, those who did not had been forbidden to do so by their husbands. Never once did I find among them the cry of resignation "It is all over, effort is useless." I respected them and was grateful to them, for they were simple, great and faithful. And while I thought of them in my wanderings from one modest home to another, and tormented myself about the misfortunes of our country, one scene for ever kept passing before my eyes. Though the snow was falling and it was dark I could see an eastern city under a burning sky; a house with pillars, the house of Pilate, and in the hall stood Our Lord in bonds. In front of the house a crowd, mad with hatred, clamoured: "Crucify Him, Crucify Him!"

That is what they are shouting against our fettered country to-day. They drag it down among themselves, put a crown of thorns upon its head, smite it and spit upon it. They load it with a heavy cross and drive it unto the place called Golgotha. They nail it to the cross, so that it shall be able to see with its dying, bloodshot eyes, how they cast lots for its vesture at its feet. Then they put it into a sepulchre and roll a great stone before it, sealing the stone and setting a watch so that it shall not be able to rise . . .

His disciples and followers hid in despair and left

His grave alone—they had no more hope. But on the third day, very early in the morning, women went through the blue dawn to His grave. It was women who saw His resurrection . . . The memory of that beautiful, sacred vision must have remained in their eyes. For thousands of years it has always been women who have seen resurrection on earth.

Now, too, they see it, or would they follow me ?

I did not want to be their leader, but the idea wanted it and ordained that I should be its apostle. When I was tired, when I felt down-hearted and doubt assailed me, whenever I felt unworthy of the call, I always remembered that the love for one's country and people which is put into one's soul is the measure of what one is able to achieve. It will succeed, it must succeed; and my voice, broken with much speaking, recovered before another meeting at the other end of the town, and women who had heard me already ran in front of me in the street, so that when I reached the new meeting they were waiting for me there, and listened to me again.

Late at night, dead tired, I struggle home, and flee to my mother for rest. We sit for a long time in the little green room, and she encourages me if I am weary, and she always finds the word that heals. Then, late, we go to sleep. The evening is long and gives me rest. I speak of my wanderings—and what I had felt dimly, as if in a haze, while my fatigue lasted, revives with imperative insistence, and I can think of nothing else.

. . . .

To-day a new misfortune has overtaken Hungary. The French Colonel Vyx, who has lately come to Budapest as head of the Entente's military mission, has sent a memorandum to the Hungarian Government, which contains the price of the Czechs' high-treason. The victorious Powers claim from Hungary the evacuation of all Upper Hungary, because they recognise the sovereignty of the Czecho-Slovak State and consider its army as an allied army . . .

I could hardly stop myself from trembling: a wave of utter sorrow and degradation passed over me. The heralds of right and justice, the new saviours of the world, regardless of the conditions of the armistice, simply order us to deliver up our country's great out post, the Carpathians and eighteen of our most lovely counties, to those who never owned them, who are called the "allies" of the Entente although for many years they had been the main support of Austria's power, and its chief executioners. We Hungarians could tell a tale about that. After our war of liberation, they, as the secret agents of Austrian absolutism, *agents provocateurs,* and hangmen plenipotentiary, tortured Hungary's people more cruelly than any conqueror has ever done. And Venice and Lombardy could tell a tale too. There the memory of imperial torturers, "*gli sbirre austriaci,*" still haunts the country, and most of those were Czechs. It is they who are responsible for the turn things have taken, and yet, as allied forces of the Allies, they now participate in the execution of the armistice which directs the occupation of the old Monarchy's territory!

At the beginning of November fifteen complete Hungarian divisions came back from the front. If they were still here . . .

I was horrified and looked at my mother. She was thinking of the same things as I did. And like people who, sitting up with one whom they love and who is dangerously ill, try to strengthen their faith in his recovery by speaking of times when the patient was strong and healthy, we two began to talk, in our vigil of olden times, of lovely summers in the distant highlands. When we were still children our parents wanted us to get to know every part of our country, and every holiday they found a cosy little nest for us in some different county. Summers in the Carpathians; charming little spas, villages in the forest, quiet, secluded little towns among the mountains . . . The green fields of the Mátra . . . the Pressburg of Maria Theresa . . . the towns of the Zips, and Kassa with its ancient cathedral . . . the High Tátra reaching into the clouds . . . the wilderness of Bereg . . . the forests of Marmaros . . . and the heaving waters of the Tisza . . . Past lovely summers—past with Hungary's soul.

But we shall take it back! . . . And next day I was up again and carried the word to the women and poured my faith into their hearts.

Photo. Erdelyi, Budapest.

THE VALLEY OF THE GARAM

(GIVEN TO CZECHO-SLOVAKIA BY THE TREATY OF TRIANON).

The streets and squares are now darker than ever. A new order has been published that shops are to be closed at five, and so the shop-windows are dark after that hour. I passed in front of a Kinematograph, where big coloured posters near the entrance "featured" Tisza's death. An actor was made up as Tisza, and an actress represented Countess Tisza: Denise Almássy too was impersonated. The manager had had the reel staged on the authentic spot of the murder. Did he get the murderers to play their own parts, I wonder?

As I passed, I listened with disgust to the remarks exchanged by people coming out from the performance. All Pest is whispering about a sailor who boasts everywhere that it was he who killed Tisza. It is also said that Countess Almássy, while dining at the Hotel Ritz, recognised with horror one of Tisza's murderers. She asked, "Who is that man?" And somebody answered: "The President of the Soldiers' Council, Joseph Pogány." But it was only an invention, for Denise Almássy has never been in town since the murder. All sorts of rumours get about. It is said that at the War Office the Government has paid out hundreds of thousands of crowns to suspicious individuals who have rendered great service to the revolution. The members of the first Soldiers' Council have received considerable amounts, nobody knows why. But Károlyi probably knows, and if he cared to look into matters he might find Tisza's murderers among them.

We live in a quagmire and around us Bolshevism is organising more openly every day.

I went home along the banks of the Danube. A small lighter towed a long raft down stream. A man sat on the stairs of the embankment, and his head was bowed between drawn-up knees. A child passed me, its bare feet wrapped in bits of old carpet and the ends of the strings with which they were tied up dragged behind him in the mud. The shops were already closed and the streets were in darkness. At the edge of the footpath a queer little figure was alternately stooping and standing up. As I got nearer I saw that it was an old woman, clothed in an old-fashioned cloak of beadwork and with a shabby bonnet on her head, who was searching among the garbage in the dust bins that stood by the side of the street. A little basket hung on her arm, and she was collecting putrid bits of food.

This town is haunted by strange sounds. Foreign money rings, banknotes rustle, and one cannot see who gives or takes. But the recipient sells his services for the foreign money and then whispers something broadcast in the streets. The cloaked woman among the garbage boxes, the despairing man on the stairs, and the child whose feet protrude naked from scraps of carpet, they all hear it.

A crowd gathers, no one knows whence, and soldiers and sailors appear. Suddenly someone jumps up on a box and begins to make a speech.

"It is all the fault of the gentle-folk, the counts, the priests and the bourgeois! They ought to be knocked on the head, every one of them!"

CHAPTER XII.

December 8th.

My way took me through the garden of the old Polytechnic. The place was black with people. In the great hall of the 'Stork's Fort' Széklers and Transylvanian Hungarians were gathered together. The streets poured forth their masses: the crush up there must have been awful. I stopped against the railings and looked at the passers-by, excited officers, Székler soldiers, sad, care-worn people—homeless, every one of them. All their faces were of the Hungarian type. These are the people of whom the radical press of Budapest writes that they ought to be expelled, because there is a scarcity of lodgings!

Would these papers dare to write such a thing of, say, Englishmen, Frenchmen or Italians? Can it be imagined that we should expel from their own capital these unfortunate people, while foreign refugees, who could have returned home long ago, have filled the houses? In the first year of the war caravans of Galician Jews clad in gabardines fled before the Russian invasion. They were Austrian citizens, but the Hungarian capital received them nevertheless. They stayed on and have enriched themselves. And now, when homeless Hungarians are coming back, the Budapest press of the Hungarian Government shows them the door.

A big crowd of men came towards the garden, good looking, shabbily dressed gentlemen, who might have been officials who had refused to take the oath of allegiance to the invading Roumanians or Czechs. They reminded me of a declaration of the socialist Minister for Public Welfare, Kunfi: "As we are going to be a smaller country, we shall not be able to support the many officials of old Hungary. These will have to seek their living in America." We have come to this! The radical press of the immigrants advocates the expulsion of the Hungarian refugees, and the Minister of Public Welfare advises the native Hungarian intellectuals to emigrate!

So there is no more room for us in our own country?

It is a wicked, devilish game. Words are used as keys to open the dark underground passages which undermine our country. The War Minister of Károlyi's Government says to the Hungarian army "I never want to see a soldier again." The Minister for Nationalities ruins our fellow nationals and hands them over to the yoke of foreigners. The Minister of Finance says: "I don't want to see a rich man; I shall impose such taxes in Hungary as the history of the world has never known." The Prime Minister declares that whoever invades Hungary, we shall appeal to the judgment of the civilised world, but we won't draw sword against the invader.

Just then some Transylvanian undergraduates dragged a little cart into the middle of the garden. A Transylvanian soldier was standing on it and he shouted out what had been discussed up in the hall.

"We will rise to arms. We swear it by our freedom, fifteen hundred years old!"

An officer swore in the name of the Székler commando: "Our bodies and our souls for the Széklers' Independence."

"We have had enough war!" shouted a Budapest pacificist. He was expelled noisily from the place. Angry cries followed him down the stairs, and then a thousand voices shouted the curse: "May God forsake him who does not help the Széklers in their struggle!"

I raised my head. It seemed to me that at last the town of silently suffering Hungarians had regained her voice, that the Széklers had given it back to her; and the cheers, rising, gigantic, in the garden, spread over the streets like a great, solemn oath.

* * * * * * * *

December 9th-11th.

A black tablet has been hung under the glass roof of the railway station upon which the names of towns have been written with chalk: Ruttka, Kassa, Körösmezö, Kolozsvár, Arad, Orsova, Szeged-Rókus, Pécs, Esszék. There are no more trains for these from Budapest. Passengers wait in vain. No more trains will come from the capital of Hungary. The nerves are severed, the arteries are cut, life-blood is oozing slowly out of them. Communication has ceased; tracks are covered with snow and the signal lamps are extinguished. Silence reigns in the distant little stations, the silence of a shudder. Who knows what may happen before the connection is renewed? Foreign rule occupies our towns, it spreads further and further, always nearer to the centre . . .

And as each day passes, here in the isolated heart of the country everything is getting more and more antagonistic, dividing even those who have the power in their hands. The proposed law of land reform has lit a fire which shows up both extremes. Even in Károlyi's party there is a split. The radicals and socialists go hand in hand, and the Hungarians, notwithstanding their miserable position, are opposed to them.

It is said that the Government is tottering. By means of the Soldiers' and Workers' Council the power of the Socialists is increasing daily and they now claim the portfolios of War and of the Interior for themselves. Two Jews are their candidates. They accuse Batthyány of reaction and attack the Minister of War because he opposes the Soldiers' Council system, desires to diminish the socialist local guards, and recruits peasant guards in the country. They accuse him of supporting royalist movements and of forming officers' corps and emergency detachments.

The Counter-revolutionists!

This word is now beginning to raise its head in determination to break down any patriotic attempt, to stand in the way of every honest endeavour. We have reached the stage when it is counter-revolution to complain of the foreign occupations, to speak of the integrity or defence of the country's territory, or to say: "Let us work that we may not starve."

The so-called unemployed are more powerful than those who work, and they are many. Their leader is Béla Kún, and they have plenty of money.

Shirking work is one of the best means to-day of earning one's bread and it is powerfully supported by a Government which distributes millions under the name of unemployment doles, while nobody will sweep the streets; snow and dirt grow in piles, and the garbage rots in the doorways.

It happened yesterday that, after infinite pains, I managed to obtain, at a fabulous price, a few sacks of coal. The carter who brought it threw it down in front of the cellar-trap. When I asked him to shovel it in he swore vilely because it was getting dark and he was not disposed to do it. He left it there, in spite of any tip I could offer him. And so, with the help of the little German maid, we had to do it ourselves.

The other day I saw an officer dragging home a cart of firewood. My sister brought potatoes home in a Gladstone bag because nobody would carry them for her at any price. The garbage of the capital has been removed during the last few days by some officials from the town hall; no carter would do the job, and so these officials thought it would not be out of the way to 'earn,' besides their official pay of ten to twenty crowns a day, an extra one hundred and thirty crowns per diem.

While this sort of thing is going on there is a huge crowd in front of the office which pays out the unemployment dole. Lusty young men and ne'er-do-weel domestic servants 'spoon' in the crowded, disorderly queue. They get fifteen crowns daily, but are not satisfied and demand thirty. The agitators go even further and say persistently: "Everything is yours." Nothing but hatred or indifference is left now in the minds of the people.

I went to a funeral this afternoon. We buried a young woman, a victim of the epidemic. We couldn't find a cab to take us to the cemetery, so we all walked. The priest was late, as he too was unable to find a cab. The large, cold garden of the dead was getting dark among the black cypresses when the coffin was lowered into the grave. The grave-diggers had waited a long time, and they became impatient and grumbled furiously. We heard coarse words. One of them looked at his watch. "It's too late," he said, "we'll leave it till to-morrow." So they stuck their spades into the mound of earth, took their hats and left. Down in the open grave lay the coffin, and the dismayed silence was broken by the fall of little clods of earth upon it. We looked at each other helplessly; nobody dared to speak.

"I won't leave her like this," said the widower, and taking the spade in his shaking hands he covered with earth the most precious thing that life had given him. The lumps of earth showered noisily down on to the coffin. For a moment we stood overawed, the whole thing seemed so terrible, then we bent down and helped with our naked hands.

And in the dark a heart-breaking sob raised a human protest against all inhumanity . . .

. . . .

December 12th.

A big red flag appeared in the streets this morning and went slowly towards the Danube under a gray, smoky sky. Street urchins ran beside it; the rabble rushed on like dust before the wind. The people in the street hugged the walls of the houses and again the flag came in sight, approaching unsteadily, followed by soldiers, at whose head an officer rode, with drawn sword. His face struck me as if I had been hit across the eyes by a twig. His ears projected from both sides under the officer's cap, and his lips formed a fleshy arc.

The face of the leader—the face of the people and of the army. The face of the soldiers of our war of liberation in 1848 was the face of Görgei, of Kossuth, of Petöfi. The face of Hungary of the Great War was the sad, resolute face of Stephen Tisza. The face of the October revolution was Michael Károlyi . . . And the face of this detachment with the red flag was the officer heading it.

Behind him the infantry came in irregular formation, many of the soldiers smoking. Guns rumbled after them; two gunners sat jolting on one of the guns, red ribbons floating from their caps. They were smoking too . . . The crowd went on. A battery of field artillery followed, and Hussars rode at the end. One trooper signalled to a lady friend of his who was passing, stopped his horse and had a nice, comfortable chat with her from the saddle, then he galloped after the rest.

Somebody said: "The whole garrison is here! They are going to Buda." "What for?" Nobody knew. Meanwhile the red flag was climbing up the hillside towards the royal castle.

The city and the other quarters of the town knew nothing of this procession. Nobody troubled about it. The citizens of Budapest were apathetic and indifferent, and thought no more about it than did the bridge which suffered the procession to cross it. Men continued to live their precarious lives and everything seemed to be the same as yesterday, but in the afternoon came the news that this garrison had caused the downfall of the War Minister! The Soldiers' Council and Joseph Pogány had ousted Albert Bartha.

It happened in the castle, on St. George's Square. I heard of it from an eye-witness. The infantry stood in a row, with machine-guns and the artillery behind them. And while threats against Bartha were shouted, the malicious face of Joseph Pogány-Schwarz appeared in one of the windows of the building occupied by the Soldiers' Council. The officers on horseback saw him and shouted his name and cheered him. Then the demonstrators cheered Károlyi. Meanwhile a delegation of the garrison's confidential men, led by Dr. Mór, a reserve officer, went up to the Prime Minister and presented him with a paper containing the demands of the garrison.

Károlyi received the delegation in deadly fear.

The soldiery down in the square turned their guns and machine-guns on the War Office . . . That is how they waited for an answer. As a matter of fact most of the men did not care what happened. It was the confidential men who told them how to come here, and what to demand, and accordingly they came and demanded: "Let Bartha resign and be replaced by a civilian Minister of War who will organise a democratic army. The staff-officers must be dismissed from the War Office, and the proclamation concerning the Soldiers' Council and the Confidential Men, suppressed by Bartha, must be put into execution at once. All the Minister's special officers' detachments are to be disbanded." Finally they demanded that the officers should in future be elected by the ranks, and that rankers should be qualified to become officers.

In the reception-room of the Prime Minister, Károlyi addressed the deputation, submitted, promised everything and—gave up Bartha.

"I saw with pleasure," he said, "the many thousands of soldiers, because it has afforded me the evidence of my own eyes that the Hungarian Government is not defenceless, but has a powerful army at its back."

As a matter of fact, at that moment the powerful army was not standing at his back but opposite him; an army that was good for nothing but to demonstrate in Budapest, and whose heroism was directed against his War Office, upon which its guns were trained.

Then the soldiers marched to the offices of the Soldiers' Council and Pogány addressed them in words full of vainglory:

"This demonstration has shown that there are enough soldiers, and that the troops are in the hands of the confidential men. It has shown," he shouted in rapture, "that discipline can be maintained, but only when it is the troops themselves who maintain it . . ."

"Long live Pogány, the Minister of War . . ." rose the cry under the red flag. And he, red with the effort of shouting, roared the following threats: "We won't allow Budapest's social-democratic army to be disbanded, just because it is social-democratic! We won't tolerate the formation of independent peasants' detachments!"

"Long live the socialist army! Down with the peasants' detachments!" came the shout back from the square.

This morning something else was lost up there in the castle. Only a desperate effort made by secret organisation can help us now. The army of Hungary has passed entirely into the hands of Pogány-Schwarz, and the soldiers, drunk with joy, are shooting in the streets.

. . . .

December 13th-15th.

The die was cast yesterday in the Castle, and the red flag was hoisted.

It is now impossible to patch up the country's misfortune. It is the Government which has patched itself up. Albert Bartha, the patriotic Hungarian soldier, has left, and so has Batthyány. The socialists had intended the Ministry of the Interior for the communist Eugene Landler, but they did not succeed in that. All the same, the victory of the socialists is complete—they have got the War Office! For the present Károlyi is temporary Minister of War, but it is obvious that a little Jewish electrician, the social-democrat, William Böhm, stands behind him, though not so long ago he was repairing the typewriters and electric installations of the office.

"Good, you have come at last; just repair my machine!" the girl-clerks said to him when they saw him in the passages of the War Office. "I am the Minister of War," Böhm answered proudly, and sat down at Bartha's desk. Already he calls himself Hungary's Minister of War. Károlyi still masks him, but the game is obvious. When Károlyi formed his government on the 1st of November he started with five Jewish Ministers, but as he was afraid of public opinion he confessed to three only: Jászi, Garami and Kunfi, while in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diener-Dénes, and in the Ministry of Finance Paul Szende were hidden behind his own name.

They advance with frightful rapidity. The powers of destruction are putting into practice with ruthless logic the pronouncement of Kunfi to the National Assembly on the day the republic was proclaimed under the cupola of the House of Parliament: "After the institutions we shall have to change men; we must put into every place in this country men who are inspired by the spirit of our new revolutionary ideas."

It is clear now who these are, for the military and civilian administrations are already filled with people who used to work behind the counters of shops or banks, or in editorial offices, and used to mock at the unpractical Hungarian intellectuals who struggled for starvation wages in the public offices. Now they are taking their places, getting sudden rises in their salaries, and pursuing a racial policy such as, alas! the Hungarian race has never been able to pursue.

"We are wiping out a thousand years," is their

WILLIAM BÖHM,

TYPEWRITER AGENT. PEOPLE'S COMMISSARY FOR (1) HOME AFFAIRS; (2) WAR OFFICE. LATER A COMMANDER OF THE RED ARMY, AND FINALLY "AMBASSADOR" AT VIENNA.

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cry, and they find fault with all the old institutions; but so far as they themselves are concerned, no criticism is allowed.

"Do you know, we have now come to this," a tradesman said to me in his shop, looking round cautiously as he spoke, "that it is counter-revolution to push a Galician Jew by accident in the street."

Now that we have retired from everything, and Hungary's social life has been swallowed up in the nation's poverty and mourning, the twin-type of the war-millionaire, the revolution-millionaire, begins to play his part. A new kind of public invades the restaurants, the theatres and the places of amusement: plays, written by its writers, are played to full houses; people in gabardines occupy the stalls, while in the boxes orthodox Jewish women in wigs chatter in Yiddish, and in the interval eat garlic-scented sausages in the beautiful, noble foyer of the Royal Opera, and throw greasy paper bags about.

In the restaurants of the Ritz and Hungaria Hotels a new type of guests eat exclusively with their knives; their mentality is shown by the fact that the other day when a few French officers left a restaurant, they ordered the gipsy band to play the 'Marseillaise,' and rose to their feet. One of the officers turned back and said: "Sale nation . . ."

Invading conquerors sometimes deprive the conquered of freedom, weapons, and goods; but our conquerors deprive us of our honour as well.

Every day it becomes clearer to me that we shall never be able to repel the devastators pouring in over our frontiers till we have dealt with the devastators in our midst, and have put them back into their place. And—if we all work hand in hand—

Count Stephen Bethlen wants to weld all the patriotic Hungarian parties into one.

We women are already great in numbers. Every day we form new camps in different quarters of the town. I address the women, and tell them that our fortress is a triangle, the three advanced outworks being our country, our faith, and our family. These three outworks are threatened by Jewish socialist-communism. Before the foe can storm the fort we must strengthen the souls of the defenders so that the offensive may collapse. Of all humanity, women will be the heaviest losers if the war is lost and the communists win, for women are to be common property when once the home is broken up, and God and country have been denied.

The testament of Peter the Great is the programme of Panslavism. The communist declaration of Karl Marx, the son of a rabbi, Mordechai by his real name, is the programme of Panjudaism. If it is realised, Hungary perishes, and human culture will follow it into its grave. We who fight on the soil of dismembered, trampled Hungary do not fight for ourselves alone, but for every Christian woman in the world. They know it not, and they stretch forth no hand to help us, but look on while the nations to which they belong ruin us. But the day may still come when we shall be understood.

Those who heard my words followed me, and many of them offered their help, though at that time it was dangerous to make such an offer. I noticed more than once that furtive steps followed me in the streets, stopping when I stopped, and going on when I started again. They accompanied me down dark staircases, and when I looked back from a door I had entered, someone was standing in the dark and watching.

The Government knows about us, the police are watching us, but in vain; the idea goes on and spreads. Whenever I express it people recognise it as their own. It cannot be stopped now.

. . . .

December 16th.

Once upon a time . . . Or was it not so long ago? Was it on a winter evening in my childhood that I heard the story that once, up there in the Carpathians, a huge giant opened his jaws and tried to swallow the world? We were already between his teeth, and all over the world folk said that that was the end of us. Poor little Hungary was done for, Imperial Austria would follow, and then it would be the turn of Germany. It seemed as if our time had come. In the shadow of the Alps, Italy waiting for her opportunity, drew her dagger from under her cloak, and stabbed us in the back. Roumania was feverishly tugging at her knife.

"Nothing can help the Central Powers now" . . . The whole world said so, and thought us easy victims.

Then a miracle happened. It was on a certain day in May, and on that spring morning the three allies started an attack near Gorlice. "Mackensen, Mackensen!" they shouted in victory, and the Tsar's Russia, the most terrible enemy whom a people had ever encountered, fell upon us.

Was it a long time ago? Was it in my childhood that I heard the story, that, down in Transylvania, like an echo of Gorlice, the name of Mackensen rose again as a cry of victory above the Hungarian and German armies? And then, above the vast mirror of the Danube's flood, a third time the name of Mackensen resounded. For the third time he stood at the head of the armies that were defending the gates of Hungary.

Was it a long time ago? Was it so long ago that time has obliterated its memory? It was yesterday! It was on history's bloody page in the world-war, while there was still hope, while our honour was still bright.

And to-day when Mackensen came to Budapest to negotiate with Károlyi for the repatriation of his army, the red soldiers of Pogány-Schwarz, under the leadership of Captain Gerö-Grosz, with full knowledge of the Government, dragged machine-guns to the railway station and trained their muzzles on the line, while an evening paper had its Kinema operator ready. That is how Hungary's capital prepared for the reception of Field-Marshal von Mackensen.

When he looked out of his carriage window and saw the shameful spectacle of the railway station fortified against him, his fine, sharp features were distorted with rage. He took it in at a glance: he had been trapped. Capt. Gerö went up to him and told him he was a prisoner. Then he informed him that Károlyi wanted to negotiate with him and expected him at the House of Parliament. Mackensen protested, refused to go, and desired that Károlyi or his representative should come to the station. Capt. Gerö informed him that any refusal on his part would have disastrous consequences for his army.

After fierce argument the Field-Marshal reluctantly yielded, but declared that he would not leave his carriage till the machine-guns and the kinematograph apparatus were removed from the station. This was conceded. When he got out his face was white with anger and his chest heaved so that the decorations on it shook. He walked with his head erect to the closed car that was waiting for him.

The meeting between him and Károlyi took place in the House of Parliament, in the Prime Minister's room. A German friend of mine gave me the following account of it, received directly from the Field-Marshal's lips.

Károlyi received him standing and advanced a few steps to meet him. Behind him the social democratic secretary for War, the little Jewish electrician, was making himself as small as possible. Mackensen remained rigid, with both hands behind his back, glaring at the two men. He listened without a word to Károlyi, who, putting the responsibility on the powers of the Entente, requested him to give up all the arms of his army in conformity with the Belgrade Armistice. The Field-Marshal declined and said that as far as he was concerned, and according to his instructions from Spa, the conditions of the armistice concluded on the Western front were in force. He also declared that he would not leave Hungary till the last man of his army was over the frontier.

Károlyi informed him that he could not leave in any case, as he, with his whole army, was going to be interned in Fóth.

"I did not expect that!" said Mackensen. And hard words were spoken between them. The Hungarian Government, however, had left itself a loophole. At first Károlyi threatened to intern the whole army, but at length he conceded that disarmament would be sufficient, and this Mackensen accepted only conditionally with the consent of the German Government.

During the debate Károlyi stuttered more than usual, and when this painful meeting came to an end he proffered his hand hesitatingly to Mackensen. The Field-Marshal measured him with contempt: "I have had to do with many people in my life, but I have never before met a man who was so devoid of all honour as you are." Then, with a slight nod, he turned his back on him. And the hand of Michael Károlyi, which had already been contemptuously ignored by the French General Franchet d'Esperay, was left empty in the air.

It was thus that Mackensen became a prisoner of Hungary.

Was it a long time ago? Was it in my childhood that I heard the story that once upon a time the shout of "Mackensen, Mackensen!" resounded victoriously at three gates of Hungary?

. . . .

December 17th-22nd.

We walk in the gutter of shame between two close, high walls, whence there is no escape and no rest. In this deadly atmosphere we sink deeper and deeper at every turning.

Yesterday evening was even worse than usual. It was late when I said good-night to my mother, and I could get no sleep. Nations carry their misfortunes in common, and that is why they can bear the worst, but the shame which has now befallen us is so colossal that it seems to belong to us alone. It isolates us from humanity. I had been lying motionless in the dark for a long time and could think of nothing but how Károlyi had sinned against us. To-morrow the whole world will know it and even our enemies will despise us for it.

Our enemies? . . . The face of a German soldier seemed to stare at me from the dark. He was wounded; a shell had torn off both his legs. He had been brought from Transylvania about two years ago. I had spoken to him in the German hut at the railway station. And then there appeared another, and, as in a mad feverish dream, they came, and came, through the dark, pressing on in endless array, covered with blood, lame, mutilated, all those I had met in four and a half years' of war. One looked hard and scornful, another reproachful, and all stared at me pitilessly, and in my dream I could hear their moans.

During the years of war, the German, in his infinite pride, clumsily, coarsely, often hurt us, as he has hurt us before many times in history. His dreams of annexations have often eliminated the possibility of peace. His manner of waging war, the work of his diplomacy, and, above all, the arrogance he assumed in dealing with us, were often strange to our mind. But we recognised his greatness, his strength, his endurance and his honour, and I am convinced that there is not a single Hungarian in Hungary who does not repudiate, desperately and indignantly, that which Károlyi has dared to do in our name to Mackensen.

It was torture to lie still in bed. Why is there nobody among us who will avenge this? Why is there nobody who will wipe off the dirt before it dries on us? Innumerable eyes glared at me through the dark from under German soldiers' caps, and at last I could bear it no longer. I lit a candle and tried to read. I took up a Hungarian book, for I felt that at that moment it would be impossible to read a book in any other tongue. When my mind was troubled how often had I not found solace in Arány, Vörösmarty and Petöfi? They wept over Austrian tyranny, over the failure of our war of liberation, but for all their sufferings those were pleasant times compared with the present. They knew how to console the passing sufferings of their age, and in that their age was fortunate—but we are forsaken. In our great city of a million there is not a single poet through whose verses we can express our sorrows, who can give voice to our sufferings.

Anatole France poses as a socialist, and yet throughout the whole war he stood for the national ideals of France with the wholehearted fury of *revanche.* Gabriele d'Annunzio, proclaimed a traitor from the Capitol, led his nation off the right path, yet there was beauty in his wild war-cry because it was inflamed by the love of his country and his people. And while Anatole France and d'Annunzio sang in beautiful strains the glory and the victory of their nation, most of the poets of Budapest were in the cafés talking philosophy and pacifism, and more than one among them helped forward the rebellion at the Astoria Hotel. There were even some who proposed to the Council of Public Works that one public square should be called after Michael Károlyi, another in commemoration of the "battle" on the bridge, after the 31st of October, and the public park after a socialist newspaper! Were they misled? Maybe, but where are they now, when there can be no longer any misconception, when our land and our people are trodden down by the crowd they have joined? If Hungarian politicians have sunk into deplorable impotence, if there is not a single soldier to draw his sword, why do not the poets rouse the sleeping nation?

I crouched at my writing-table and in my grief started to address a letter to them. About an hour may have passed when suddenly I heard the creaking of a door in our flat. Steps went through the drawing-room. One was quick, the other hesitating. The dear, quaint rhythm approached and I remembered. Thus did my mother come to me when I was a child, when I had bad dreams, and even before she had reached my side all that was terrifying would vanish.

She opened the door. She could no more sleep than I could, so she sat down in the big arm-chair near my writing-table and remained there in silence. And I began to read to her what I had written.

"Our war was a war of self-defence. If anybody denies it, let him look at our frontiers north, south and east, if his tearful eyes can see so far. The war we lost was a war of self-defence. We lost it terribly, more terribly than fate had decreed. And now, the pain is so burning, our sufferings are so immeasurable, that the human brain has become benumbed and we are dropping from our hands that which we ought to hold on to.

"Our people, with its thousand years of history, stands exhausted, incapable of acting while the moments of grace which fate has given us before closing the most awful chapter of our history pass by.

"The sand is running out, and there is no hand to stay it. Where is he who will seize the moment and shout a message to our unarmed brethren perishing amid the bayonets of Czechs, Roumanians and Serbs? Who will raise his voice so that it will carry beyond the walls erected by war between the peoples of the world, and bring faith, hope and love to us once more? Where is he? And if his voice does not carry far enough, why in this hour of our trial have all the strings of our nation's lute been slackened? Why did our war produce no Petöfi, why is the burning pain of our defeat without Arány? The strains of soft chords carry further than the declamations of loud-voiced orators.

"Have even the songs of our fighting bards forsaken Hungary? Have the minstrels that remained at home all bled to death? The recital of our sorrows should be piercing the hearts of five continents; strength and faith should be sung to our sufferers at home, the bloodless nation should be stirred up with wild inspiring songs, so that it may not abandon hope. Poets are needed, poets whose voices can hold together the Hungarian soil, poets who will teach Hungarians to help each other.

"Let them come, I beseech them, let the poets come who still feel Hungary's pain as their own, for whom Hungary's death is the death of themselves. For Pressburg weeps above the Danube, the people of our northern counties have lost their homes, faithful Zips calls broken-hearted to the Great Plain. Kassa is ready to grasp Rákoczi's sword. Transylvania shows her martyr's wounds while the proud Székler shakes off his shackles and the ancient land that Hunyádi held is breaking its heart over the disgrace of Belgrade. Who can give us a word of comfort, who can strengthen us with faith in a better future, in this hour of our agony, if not the poets of the nation?

"And while I clamour in vain for them the immortals rise from their tombs, the great army of national spirits, planting a standard round which the millions of Hungarians should rally: a torch to guide them, a camp-fire to rest them, and the soft flames of the hearth to comfort them in the night of great deception.

"While our contemporaries fail to find a voice for our sufferings, Petöfi wanders among the ragged mutilated heroes who have returned:

"Oh shame, oh bitter shame! Once Clio's records told
Of fame no fairer than thy fair name's fame;
Now thou'rt despised, and those who would of old
Cringe at thy feet, dare strike thee free and bold
Full in the face, and cover thee with shame.

Whate'er my fate, whatever its decree,
I shall forbear and suffer for thy sake;
Though God's most bitter curse should fall on me,
Ne'er shall I rest, but goad and harass thee
Until I stir thy heart, or my heart break."

"Down there in the plain, Arány wandered after sunset over the snow-covered land. He stopped at the threshold of stately manors, under hamlets' tiny windows, lit up by the brushwood fire from within. And it is the soul of the plains that speaks from his lips:

"The Nation lives and shudders as its heart
With horror feels destruction's deadly grip . . ."

"And above all, alone, like the voice of a giant choir, the voice of Vörösmarty exclaims:

"For come it will, for come it must
The dawn of better days,
For which this land, with pious lips
Beseeches Thee and prays."

"Thus speaks the past to us while the lute of the present is silent, while innumerable, homeless Hungarians wander aimlessly in the streets of the distracted country's epidemic-ridden capital, whose streets are bedizened with flags fluttering in heartbreaking irony.

"My poor, unfortunate town, is there nobody to tell thee to put thy begrimed flags at half-mast? Hast thou not a single minstrel to rouse thee? Dost thou not see thy disgraced streets trodden by the fugitives of half thy country, by foreign armies, while all around thee the country is dismembered?

"So let the dead come with their lyre to raise the quick, let the grave shout into the dwellings of the living, let the past console the present. For the songs of Hungary's poets of the past are all our hope; for they alone hold the promise of Hungary's future."

So far had I written. In the morning I telephoned to the editor of the *Pesti Hirlap* and asked him if he wanted an article. It was the first time in my life that I had had to ask for space: up till now it was the papers who had asked me for copy. The editor accepted with thanks, so I sent him the manuscript; but I looked in vain for it in the paper next day, and the day after. I telephoned again. The editor was embarrassed, he apologised and said that he regretted he was unable to publish the article as it was not in accordance with the Government's views.

"Are the Government's views so anti-patriotic then?" I asked.

"Please don't forget," said the editor nervously, "that the present situation is terribly delicate; this may be the last bourgeois government, and goodness only knows how long it can hold its own."

"I hope not long. I would rather see destruction declare itself openly. This downfall in disguise is intolerable."

While we were speaking I heard a curious buzzing in the telephone, as if something were wrong with the apparatus. I wanted to speak to the editor of another paper, but the exchange was unable to give me the connection, though I tried for a long time. Meanwhile I sent to the *Pesti Hirlap* for my manuscript.

When it came at last I took it to the editor of the Radical *Az Ujság*. That also was a new experience, but I was determined that the article should appear in print, and refused to give in. Again the editor received my request courteously, and actually carried out his promise next day; the article appeared, though in an obscure corner, and very indistinctly set.

Some day, when peace and quiet have returned, people will wonder how this could have happened under a government which proclaimed the freedom of the press, and at a time when the mouthpiece of the Social Democrats could promise its readers over their breakfast table that "the glorious revolution" would sweep away "bourgeois" society, and could accuse the Hungarian race of jingoism because it would not renounce without protest territory it had held for a thousand years—that a poor essay dealing with Hungary's sufferings should have had to perform such an Odyssey before a newspaper could be found to publish it. It will perhaps seem just as astonishing that I received in connection with it innumerable letters of thanks, and that a friend of mine who had spent fifty-one months at the front, and who had shown reckless courage, telephoned to me, saying: "Tears came into our eyes when we read your article. I take off my hat to you for having the courage to speak out."

And while all these people, suffering greatly, were grateful because I said what they all felt, our foremost actress, Theresa Csillag, was walking about the town selling the shabby newspaper and, with her inimitable, beautiful voice, reading to the very souls of the passers-by the appeal: "Wake up!"

There are many of us, only we don't know each other.

CHAPTER XIII.

December 23rd-24th.

Everyone I have spoken to within the last few days has expressed anger and disgust over Mackensen's arrest. Countess Raphael Zichy told me she met Michael Károlyi accidentally, and told him straight out what she thought about it.

"It was bound to happen," he answered cynically, "the worst that can happen now is that I shall have the reputation of having been the first ungentlemanly prime minister of Hungary."

We met again in the Zichy Palace, the same group as last time. We had intended talking about our women's organization, but, somehow, we could not avoid the subject of Mackensen.

"We must write to him in the name of the women!" said I, and there was a chorus of approval. I was entrusted with the writing of the letter, and Prince Hohenlohe offered to translate it into German, while the others promised to collect signatures.

I wrote it the same night: it gave me no trouble, for it was already in my mind. I repudiated Károlyi's base deed, scorned it, branded it in the name of womenkind, and asked the Field Marshal to forgive what had been done against the will of the nation. We were helpless at present, but the day would come when Hungary's people would raise up a statue of him on the rocks of the Carpathians which he had defended.

My mother was the first to sign my sheet. Then I started for town, and in the evening brought home with me many signatures. A message was waiting for me at home to say that Countess Albert Apponyi was going to Fóth, and as she too had signed the letter, she would take the message of Hungary's womanhood to Mackensen for Christmas.

It was little enough, but we had no more to give. The Field Marshal understood. He read the letter at once and was deeply moved when he expressed his thanks.

Thus came the eve of Holy Christmas.

Along the pavements grimy heaps of snow were melting. Squashy black mud covered the streets, the gas lamps flickered palely, and the shops were closed at an early hour. The trams had stopped. The town was needy and cold.

When, in accordance with our yearly custom, my mother and I went to spend the holy evening with my sister Mary, we saw armed drunken soldiers loafing about the streets. All round us there was firing going on, and the windows of the houses were in darkness.

Everywhere in Hungary the windows are dark to-day, and there is shooting among the houses of peaceful people. Only the frontiers, the dangerously receding frontiers, are quiet under the wintry sky. Over the snow-covered fields of Transylvania a Roumanian general is marching on Kolozsvár with four thousand men. Yesterday his advance guards entered the town of King Matthias Corvinus. I wept when I heard it . . .

The French Lieut.-Colonel Vyx has sent another memorandum. He has advanced the Entente's line of demarcation once more, and has now pushed it beyond Pressburg, Kassa, Kolozsvár, beyond many lovely Hungarian towns. And the Czechs and Serbians are still advancing . . .

Never has Hungary known a sadder Christmas than this one. There are no lights on our Christmas tree, it has been turned into a gallows tree and bound to it stands our generation, wounded more deeply than any Hungarian generation has ever been wounded before.

. . . .

Christmas Night.

An icy wind was blowing when my mother and I came home through the unfriendly streets, and volleys were being fired in the direction of one of the barracks. We went out and came back amidst the clatter of firearms, and between the two journeys there was the picture of my sister's home, the usual room, the dwarf pine tree, with spluttering, bad candles, and, on the table, covered with white linen, the children's presents. They at least enjoyed it. The little boy thought that his brother's patched up rocking horse was new, and that everything was lovely. Poor children of a poor age, it is as well that they don't know what our Christmasses were like! . . . A hundred candles, a noble, grand fir tree reaching up to the ceiling. The smell of pure wax mingling with the perfume of the fir, fresh from the Vág valley, and every wish of the year was satisfied under that tree. Beyond that, I saw another tree, then another, and another, many more . . . Burning candles and green fir trees carried me back into the years of the past: an avenue of shining Christmas trees, the end of which is so far away that in the depth of its perspective I can see myself quite small. There, far away, I was a child, like those who now count me among the old. Then all the old folk were still with me, the dear old ones who stand between us and death when we start life. There are many of them, many defending rows, so that we cannot see the end of the road . . . As we advance, one after another they disappear. My two grandmothers, my father . . . One defending row after the other has fallen out, and now only my mother and Uncle Géza, her brother, stand in front of me . . . I am coming to the front myself; like the others before me, I am hiding the end of the road from the children who are growing up . . .

When childhood has passed, the festivities of Christmas are always damped by the quiet sadness of memories. And this year it is not only the past of individuals but the past of our country, our people that haunts us. How lovely Christmas used to be . . . Hungary's Christmas! So naturally lovely that we did not know . . .

Christmas bells! When they called to midnight mass their clanging mingled with the rattle of machine-guns.

. . . .

December 25th-30th.

In the good old times the last week of the year used to be one uninterrupted holiday. This year it is only a horrible part of the desperate road we have to tread. The news spreads from one to the other: to-morrow—the day after to-morrow—on New Year's Eve at the latest—there is going to be great slaughter in the town. Everything one sees is cruel, rough and repellent. I have hidden from it these last few days, and, near my mother, in the peace of my home, once more I have had time to think.

The Government speaks of elections, and promises this sham legal confirmation of its power for January, as the Entente refuses to deal with it under present conditions. Meanwhile the Social Democrats are trying to win over the villages, so the reform of the land-laws is again to the fore. They have always been a poisonous wound in Hungarian life, and should have been altered, justly, soberly, many a year ago. Previous governments have postponed it unscrupulously; the present government wants to use it as a firebrand. Buza Barna, the Minister for Agriculture, has promised so much land to those who want it that he wouldn't be able to find it even if he were to divide up all the entailed and private estates; and he has promised it for such an early date that it is technically impossible to deal with the matter in time.

The intention is obvious. After the Russian pattern, they want to gain the peaceful peasants' adherence to their revolutionary principles. So they promise land to everybody. This lying promise has spread with evil results: following the example of the workers in the towns, the agricultural labourers have now stopped work. They expect to till their own plots in the spring, so why should they work for others now? No autumn sowing is being done, and while the country is starving, maize, potatoes, beetroot, swedes and vegetables worth millions remain in the fields unharvested. Agitators visit the villages, inciting the people against private property and landlords, and appealing to the servants and labourers to take possession of the land.

As the Budapest Soldiers' Council rules over the military administration of the government by means of its government delegates, so the Budapest Workers' Council lords it over the civil administration through its Socialist ministers. The leaders of the Soldiers' and the Workers' Councils are all of the foreign race, and they never tire of advancing their intentions of spoliation, wrapped in the utopian dreams of Bolshevism. The Workers' Council at its last meeting in the New Town Hall settled the fate of land reform by simply overthrowing it, by declaring that the land was common property—that all private property must cease. Then they settled the question of taxes in a manner that effectually rendered any further discussion unnecessary. They proposed a hundred per cent. tax on all property —*i.e.* confiscation.

These declarations and propositions are spreading rapidly all over the country and preparing the minds of the people for the second revolution, which Zsigmond Kunfi, Lenin's emissary, threatens us will break out if the middle classes show resistance or dare to organise, or go so far as to attempt to give satisfaction to the powers of the Entente, who would prefer to deal with a middle class government rather than with the present rulers of Bolshevist tendencies. "There is need for a new revolution," says he, "and it will come."

The Government made no provision for order, coal or food during the Christmas holidays, but promised a new revolution instead—and it is with this promise that the terrible year makes its exit.

. . . .

December 31st.

It was by accident that I went there. In front of the Maria Theresa barracks the soldiers had erected barricades of benches and seats on the pavement. They laid their loaded rifles on the backs of the seats, sat there and drew a bead on everybody who approached. "Get away from here!" they shouted. Now and then a shot rang out, but no damage was done.

I went into a shop; it was already crowded, and people were talking excitedly. Somebody said there was to be a communist meeting in the barracks.

Béla Kún was to come from the Francis Joseph barracks, where he had incited the men to drive away their officers, but the soldiers could not make up their minds. Most of them watched the proceedings from the windows and then somebody fired a shot down into the yard, whence the fire was returned. There was a lot of firing and Béla Kún and his associates disappeared in the confusion. The soldiers then began to maltreat their officers and broke into the armoury, where about four thousand of them obtained arms. They are coming now, and are going to occupy the streets . . .

Four thousand men! It was precisely that number of Roumanians who occupied Kolozsvár, but there were no four thousand Hungarians to face them. By order of the Government Lászlo Fényes had disarmed and sent away the Székler guards. It was in vain that Fényes was beaten later on by desperate Transylvanian fists, for four thousand Roumanians had meanwhile torn Kolozsvár from the country . . .

I was brought back to the present by people running past the shop. Someone shouted "The Communists are coming!" A panic followed. Everybody rushed into the street, and the shops' shutters were drawn down quickly behind them. Red rags appeared on houses, and the middle of the road became as empty as if it had been swept clean. An armed lorry passed.

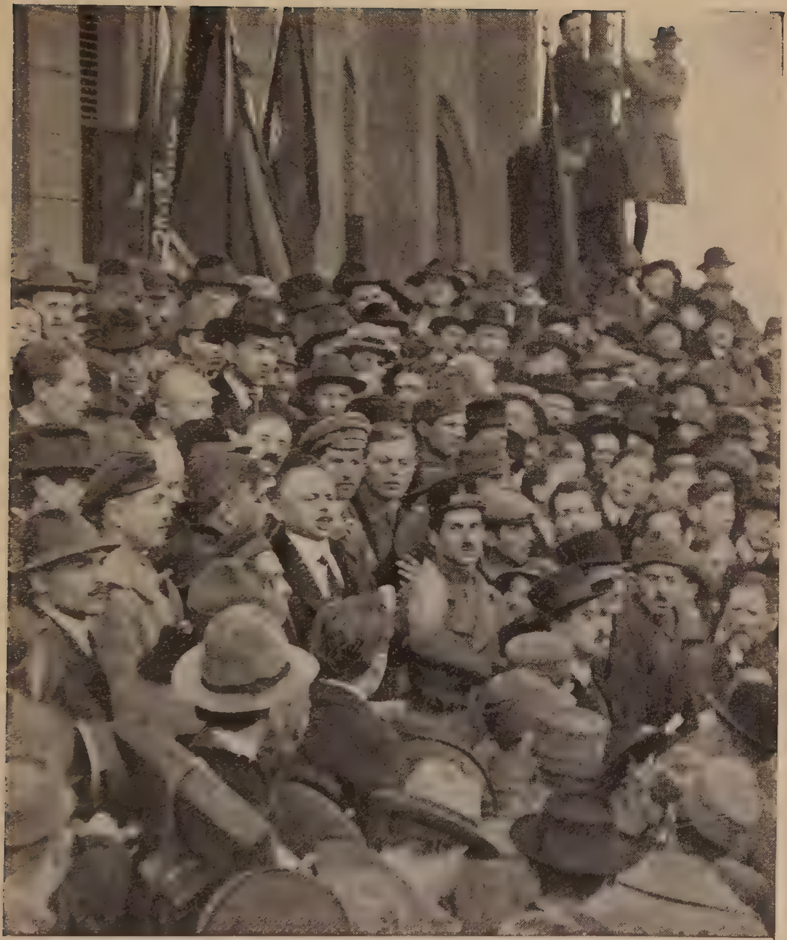
"There! That one on the right, that's Béla Kún!" Hands pointed to a vulgar-looking, yellow-skinned, dark-eyed, puffy-faced individual. His hat was tilted to the nape of his neck and his overcoat was open.

As I was going home by a round-about way I pondered on the man I had seen. Where had I seen his face before? Suddenly I remembered. Shortly after the October revolution a man was addressing some disabled soldiers from the top of a garbage box near the railway station. I had been astonished at the time to see how this ghetto-Jew, who spoke bad Hungarian and had only lately discarded the gabardine, managed to get a hearing. I remembered that clearly. He had a common fat face and his eyes blinked while he preached against the existing order. His blubbering mouth opened and closed as if he were chewing the cud. He shouted in a hoarse, lifeless voice. He grew warm, and as he spoke he removed his hat frequently and wiped the perspiration off his baldish head with the palm of his dirty hand. I had wondered at the ugly foreign people who were listened to now-a-days by our folk. People who can't speak Hungarian set one Hungarian against another.

There was no doubt whatever about it. The man on the garbage box and the man whom the people pointed out as Béla Kún were one and the same.

I heard later what had happened in the barracks. There too Béla Kún made a revolutionary speech. Before he started, two Jewish corporals had attempted to prepare the soldiers, but the soldiers threatened them and they were lucky to escape. Then Béla Kún tried to speak. The soldiers arrested him, boxed his ears, shoved him into the lock-up and turned the key in the door. Everybody was pleased; the soldiers cheered their officers, and it seemed for a moment that the soldiers of the Maria Theresa barracks would stand their ground and beat anarchy. Then Joseph Pogány arrived in a motor car with his escort. He inquired excitedly what had happened, cursed both officers and men, and hurried to Béla Kún. They had a long conversation in the lock-up, then Pogány solemnly released the Communist and drove him off in his car. Meanwhile the mutinous soldiers from the Francis Joseph barracks arrived. It was quick work. When Pogány's motor started with Béla Kún in it the soldiers were already shouting with all their might "Long live Communism!"

In the afternoon Countess Károlyi, escorted by her husband's secretary, an officer called Jeszenszky, visited the barracks. In the evening it was the talk of the town that there was going to be a mutiny, and that the citizens were going to be massacred at night. Explosions were heard now and then in the dark, and the rumour spread that the communists had blown up a munition factory and the railway bridge. They were all false; it was only the soldiers out on a spree. They fired the heavy guns, threw hand-



BELA KUN,

ANNOUNCING, FROM THE STEPS OF THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT, THAT THE PROLETARIAT HAS TAKEN OVER THE GOVERNMENT.

(To face p. 214.)

grenades, dragged machine-guns into the street and fired them just to pass the time away.

Midnight drew nearer amid the clatter of fire-arms. As at Christmas, we again gathered at my sister Mary's. The New-Year's punch was standing ready in long fluted glasses, and the children kept looking at the clock.

I had a letter in my hand; it had come from the capital of Transylvania with the last Hungarian post, behind it the barrier had crashed down. It was just like getting news of the death of a relation during the war, and after he had been buried receiving the last letter from his hand. My heart bled, though I did not know, and had never seen, the writer of the epistle. I read it out aloud:

KOLOZSVAR, December 23rd, 1918.

"I have just read in the Sunday issue of 'Az Ujsag' your article 'Awake.' I cannot describe what I felt when I read your lines, and yet I feel I must write to you. Every word of your terrible, biting truth has engraved itself upon my heart. It is this tone, this hard, bitter language, that we need to-day; we need it as much as a starving man needs a bit of bread, as a drowning person needs something to cling to. That is what we want: the proclamation of our confidence, our self-respect, to a world in which every nation boils with patriotism while we Hungarians, alone, proclaim internationalism, humility, and resignation—far beyond the necessities of our miserable condition.

It is true: our leaders don't feel Hungary's death—and, what is worse, our poets are silent as if they too were insensible to it. I cannot thank you enough that in this backboneless, collapsing, suicidal Hungarian world you have had courage enough to throw it in our teeth. How many Hungarians like you are there in the de-nationalised heart of our country, and how many Hungarian writers besides you feel there, what we feel here, when this evening brings us the burden of the certainty that to-morrow, on Christmas Eve, Roumanian troops will tread the streets of Kolozsvar?

I write these lines from the unhappy soil of Transylvania on the eve of the occupation of its capital. I beg of you don't forsake us poor Hungarians in the future. Write for us. We welcome your lines, your writings, as prisoners in their dungeon welcome rays of sunshine. It is possible that politically we shall fall to pieces, that the predatory nations who fall upon us will tear us to shreds, but the meeting of

Gyulafehervar cannot make a law, the Government Council of Nagy Szeben has not power enough, and the Roumanian occupation cannot bring in an army big enough to tear from our hearts that which was written there by your pen. As long as the Hungarian spirit lives, there is hope for our resurrection.

I remain, etc.,
VEGVARI.

We looked at each other. This letter came, not from a single individual, but from Kolozsvár, from the whole of unhappy, amputated Transylvania.

"What will there be in a year's time? What will remain of Hungary?" Our prophecies were gloomy indeed; the crowning mercy of hope alone remained. Then my brother-in-law said: "They can tear us to pieces, but they'll never prevent us from getting together again!"

I asked my mother what she thought.

"It is your affair now. I shall watch you."

The clock struck.

. . . .

January 1st, 1919.

This year people dare not wish each other a happy New Year. They murmur something, then cast their eyes down with a strange expression, as if they were looking into an open grave.

Kassa has been occupied by the Czechs! Under the tower of its old cathedral, down in the crypt, Rákoczi's skeleton hands are clenched and he asks: "Is it for this that you brought my body back from Turkey?" On the same day the Hungarian troops left Pressburg at the instigation of the confidential men of the Budapest Soldiers' Council. The local Workers' Council thereupon assumed control, and to-day, on New Year's day, the Italian Colonel Ricardo Barecca entered the town at the head of a Czech regiment. On the bank of the Danube, beside a marble equestrian statue of Maria Theresa, two Hungarians stand with "*Moriamur pro rege nostro*" on their lips: did they cast their eyes down in shame, is it only the stones that still say this in Pressburg? Meanwhile the Government informs the country with pacificist satisfaction that: "in order to avoid bloodshed the armed forces of the popular government have retired everywhere."

During the last few weeks the life of us Hungarians has been like an attempt to climb out of a putrid well into daylight. We have toiled painfully upwards, we have made desperate efforts to escape the slimy horrors of the water, but in vain. The wall of the well, like a slippery drain, grows higher above our heads, the water rises behind us, and there is no escape. Slimy stagnant water, beastliness, utter beastliness.

Yesterday Mackensen was surrounded by French Spahis in the castle of Fóth. He is now guarded like a criminal, and people are saying that Károlyi is responsible for this.

It is an old-established custom with us that on New-Year's day the Prime Minister should make a speech, retrospective and prospective. Michael Károlyi delivered his speech this morning. He accused the past and renounced the future, accused the old system of being responsible for all our misfortunes, and, as the only means of salvation, proclaimed his feeble-minded hobby: "We must seek help for Hungary's cause in pacificism, for in that name alone shall we conquer . . . Should pacificism fail, then I say: *finis Hungariæ.*"

Pressburg, Kassa, Kolozsvár . . . pacificism failed to save them. And the man who said on the 31st of October: "I alone can save Hungary," cries to the deceived millions on New Year's day: "*finis Hungariæ.*"

This cowardly declaration roused me from lethargy. I felt that from the moment when Károlyi renounced his prey, our unhappy country became our own, our very own. If it is over for him, it must start anew for us. Henceforth I shall work more, and more ardently.

In the afternoon we met at my Transylvanian friend's house. But before I started from home various people rang me up on the telephone, and warned me not to go out because riots were expected. Some made excuses for non-attendance, some said they had been warned by the police, others had received hints from Károlyi's immediate surroundings. Though it was scarcely four o'clock when I left home, I found that the concièrge had already locked the front door of our house. Hardly anybody was visible in the dead streets, shops and house-doors were all shut. The houses looked repellingly, selfishly down on me, and I had the unpleasant feeling that if anything happened to me not one of them would open its door to rescue me. I felt depressed by a sense of expulsion and outlawry. He who has never walked in the daytime through an empty town, where there is no soul, no carriage abroad, where all the houses are shut up, has never felt what real loneliness is.

Only a few of us met in my friend's room: a few women and a politician or two, dropped in at intervals. We were all sad and depressed, and nobody started a discussion. The only thing we decided was that our organisation should be called the National Association of Hungarian Women.

Before we parted my Transylvanian friend asked me what our material resources were. I had not thought of this, so was embarrassed, and felt rather ridiculous . . . We hadn't got a penny! . . . This is the result of having an organisation presided over by someone whose creative power is restricted to the writing-table, someone who could imagine the possession of untold treasures when her pockets were empty. I could go off to distant countries while sitting at home with my head between my hands. I could create a scorching summer while the snow was falling, and one flower was enough for me to make a spring. I could build houses and harvest golden crops, though I possessed no land, no bricks, no garden and no fields.

My friend laughed and whispered: "Don't let it out, but if you want anything tell me."

When I went home the town had regained its usual aspect. The nightmare had departed, the doors were open, the traffic had come back again into the empty streets, and nobody could tell whence the false alarm had come, whether the communists had meditated a rising, or Bartha's scattered officers' corps had projected one. It's just one of our daily frights.

. . . .

January 2nd-3rd.

Two peculiarities in the life and the manners of old people have become clear to me lately.

In our generation it has never mattered much who over-heard what one said. We are accustomed to speak openly. The security in which we lived until lately made our opinions free and gave our age its undisciplined character. I have often noticed that my mother and people of her age speak in lower tones than we do, and more discreetly. They were bred in times when there was always someone unwanted listening. The spy system of Austrian absolutism taught them to be cautious. My mother has often remarked: "You would talk of anything before anybody." I used to think that this restraint was the outcome of the educational principles of a more refined age. But since the present illegal government, afraid for its power, has taken to watching us with spies and *agents-provocateurs*, I have realised that the superior, reserved expression of our elders is not merely the outcome of a more aristocratic spirit pertaining to a world that has gone, but that it had its ultimate source in self-defence.

In the same way another peculiarity of theirs has become plain. They built their houses and made their furniture in a different way from ours. When I was a child I used to love hunting for secret drawers in ancient furniture, and concealed rooms and recesses in those cunningly built old houses. I remember that whenever I went through the abodes of past ages, old castles, manors and houses, I used to take a peculiar delight in their elaborate and intricate construction. The secret hollow spaces in the walls attracted me, and invisible cupboards—they contrasted so strangely with the smooth lines of our modern houses. I realise now that all this was not due to mere fancy. I realise that there is no precaution of this sort taken in building a house which does not spring from a wish for either attack or defence. The hidden recesses designed by the old architects, the secret drawers in old furniture, the reticent, cautious speech of former generations, all these were only protective against a danger which threatened. In the last few weeks public security has grown weaker and weaker, and the rumour has been spreading with increasing persistence that the present spendthrift government intends to lay its hand on all gold and silver in private possession. I often look round in despair at the smooth walls of our house, which refuse all help. It is not possible in these days to bury anything in the woods. The leaves have fallen long ago, poaching soldiers are roaming about everywhere, and the townspeople go out to steal wood all over the place. It is only in one's own home that one can hide anything.

I had a look at the cellar the other day, but its concrete floor would only yield to a pick-axe, which would make a noise, and leave tell-tale traces. The attics are out of the question, for we have had to remove even the few things we kept there: it is not even possible to hang the washing in them, for there are specialists of the burglar fraternity who operate from the roofs of Budapest.

I spent sleepless nights pondering over the question where we should put our silver when I brought it home; I even thought of the hollow window frames. If we took up the parquet flooring it would give very little space and we could put only a few things under it.

It was my mother who solved the problem, and we decided that I should bring the plate chest home from the bank. This was not quite as easy as it sounds, for I didn't dare to do it by myself. A few days before, we had sent my sister some curtains and pictures in a hand-cart, and a small party of soldiers had simply taken the bundle off the cart and gone off with it. So I asked a cousin of mine to come to my help. He donned his uniform and armed himself with a revolver, and under his martial escort I drove through the town. Whenever soldiers or sailors approached us a lump rose in my throat. So many dear momentoes, so many old family things were hidden in that box—practically all our valuables were rattling in the ramshackle old cab!

I got home dead-tired. The day dragged to an end, and when at last night fell and we could close the shutters without raising suspicion, and the maids had gone to bed, we three started to hide the things. My mother wrapped them up and then tied long strings to the handles of the ewers and salvers. Meanwhile I hammered small nails into the top of my bookcase, tied the strings on them and let down the salvers behind the case, one after another. It was an excellent plan: nothing was visible, either from above or from below: the things dangled peacefully in mid-air. The tea-pots and ewers gave us more trouble, but there again my mother had an idea. In the drawing-room a large mirror hung in a corner and there was a big space behind it; so we hung the teapots and jugs by strings from two hooks at the back of it.

A single electric bulb lit up the gloom of the room. A chair was placed on the stove, my cousin, in full uniform, stood on the chair, and my mother and I handed the things, dangling from their strings, up to him. He bent up and down as if he were decorating a Christmas tree.

It was long after midnight when we had finished, and as I got into bed I remembered that evening when I had seen the people in the opposite house hiding their clothes, and I sympathised even more with them now. In fact I approved of their action. The state requisitions clothes ostensibly for the soldiers, but the soldiers never get them. It is just robbery, under the guise of Socialism, like everything else nowadays: the collectors and distributors keep anything worth keeping. Many a janitor and hall porter appears suddenly in mackintoshes of British make, or valuable fur-coats, and not a soul dares to say anything. The second-hand clothes shops are full of clothes that have been commandeered.

When it comes to commandeering the silver it will be just the same. And as I went off to sleep I was as pleased with the spaces behind the mirror and the book-case as a smuggler with his cave.

. . . .

January 4th.

There are few people in the streets to-day. I left home early, for this morning the police came and told us that they were going to make a fresh examination of the villa where the burglary took place. After much running about, however, we found that the police had forgotten the whole affair, that no inquiries had been made, and that the official papers, as well as my own complaint, had been mislaid. That is what usually happens nowadays.

There is great excitement in town: the workmen are taking up a threatening attitude towards the managements of the factories. The Ganz engineering works were surrounded this morning by armed men, the managers were dismissed, and new ones appointed—under the control of the shop-stewards.

When I reached the bottom of the hill I had to wait a long time for a tram. Only one man was waiting besides me at the stopping-place. He wore a checkered pork-butcher's cap and a ragged, dirty uniform, and in his button hole he displayed the Socialist emblem, the red man with a hammer. The stopping-place was at a lonely spot, and I felt uncomfortable, for the man kept on looking at me.

I thought it as well to know with whom I had to deal.

"Has there been an accident, that there is no car?" I asked him.

"Maybe," he said abruptly. And then, as if irritated by my presence, he got angry. "We shall put things straight in no time," said he. "We've settled with the Ganz works. The trams will come next. But first of all we're going to socialize the state railways, and shall dismiss the managements of all the works and yards. In the provinces we shall take things in hand, too. Béla Kún and Comrade Vág have swept the coal-mines of Salgô Tarján."

"It was a sad sweep," said I. "The result was eleven killed and about a hundred wounded. Do you know that there was scarcely a house left standing afterwards?"

"The Communist workers behaved all right. It was the rabble that plundered the town."

"I was told that Bêla Kún set the armed workers against the unarmed population. It is said that the miners used dynamite to blow up the town. They took possession of the depôts, the railway station, the post office. Roving gypsies couldn't have done all that. It was a well organised rising."

The man looked down, smacking his leggings with his cane. When he looked up again there was hatred in his eyes.

"It's just as well that you gentle-folk should understand that from now on that's how things will be done. Everything has been yours long enough, now let it be the people's."

"Don't you suppose that those you call gentlefolk have risen from the people? To rise in the social scale one has to work, and it is worth working for. Only it is not often the work of a single life, but of several generations, till at last one reaches the goal. If from the start there is no possibility of getting on in the world, it will mean that industry, hard work and intelligence will be deprived of their reward. Would you work without a prospect of a pleasanter life?"

"No," the man said hesitatingly. Then, as if angered by his own back-sliding, he said rudely: "They tell a different tale in the Unions."

"The Jewish leaders . . ."

"Well, that's true, they are Jews, every one of them," he admitted grudgingly. "Whose fault is it? The gentle-folk's, who would not mix with us. They never troubled about us, and left us to the Jews."

"There you are right," I rejoined, and he took off his cap when I got into the tram.

I came home feeling chilled, and met three men on the stair-case, two soldiers and one in civilian clothes. The maid who opened the door informed me that they had come to commandeer lodgings.

"Did you let them in? Why did you not tell them that we already had a certified lodger?"

"It was no good. They pushed me aside and came in. Poor, dear old lady. They were so rude to her. They went everywhere, looked at everything, and told her she would not be allowed more than two rooms."

Naturally my mother was upset. A dentist with four children had put in a claim for three of our rooms with the common use of the kitchen and bathroom. If I remember rightly his name was Pollak and he had lived till then in the ghetto.

I flew into a rage. I had never heard of any lodgings being commandeered for Transylvanian refugees: they are expelled, while Galician refugees of Austrian nationality are planted in our midst. What are they afraid of? What are they fleeing from, that they thrust their way into the homes of Christians?

"I'll arrange it all, don't you worry," I said to my mother. "We haven't come to that yet . . ."

. . . .

January 5th.

It was my mother herself who took in the invitation, and the man who brought it made her promise solemnly that she would deliver it into my own hands alone.

I knew what it was about, and early in the afternoon I started on my errand. It was five o'clock before I entered the door of the house owned by the Franciscans. Some gentlemen were on the staircase before me. We met in the rooms of Stephen Zsembéry, a former deputy. All the leaders and principal members of the anti-revolutionary parties were present with the exception of Count Julius Andrássy, who had mysteriously disappeared, and Count Apponyi, who has retired from politics. Count Stephen Bethlen proposed the union of all parties, as the only means of saving the country. At first he was supported, then objections were raised and—when we broke up it was decided to meet again soon, in order to come to some final decision.

I was sad when I went home. On the way I remembered a story I had once written of how an inn stood on the plain, on the great military road. Warriors passed in great numbers, on their way to recover Buda from the Turks. They hailed from all the corners of the earth. There were only two Hungarians in the inn, but they could not get on with each other: they quarrelled, came to blows, killed each other. Over their bleeding corpses their greatest foe said happily: "That is a good job: if they had not killed each other, we never could have got the better of them."

These two Hungarians have had many names in the course of the centuries. Once they were called Ujlaki and Gara, at another time Kuruc and Labanc; then Görgey and Kossuth, quite lately Tisza and Andrássy. And to-day our perennial ghost seemed to have walked during our labours.

Æterna Hungaria . . .

CHAPTER XIV.

January 6th.

That ghost has been haunting us too long: it must be laid. Ever since I met this ever-recurring cause of our nation's defeat in the Franciscans' house, my language to the women has assumed a graver tone.

Those who have allowed the country to go to rack and ruin have not changed, and so a new future must be built up in the minds of the children. To succeed our own much tried generation we must raise up a new one which understands and holds in horror that bane of our nation, party strife, born of everlasting jealousy. We must start with the children, and see that in future no man says to his brother: "Why should it be thine? Why not mine?" Or: "If it cannot be mine, let it be rather our neighbour's child than thine . . ."

The women understand me. Our numbers grow more and more.

Cold rain was falling, slanting in the wind, as I crossed the town on foot, on my way to meet the leaders of the various organisations of Protestant women. The streets were emptier than usual, and as I approached the House of Parliament I began to feel rather nervous. The friendless streets, like the lairs of cut-throats, opened darkly into the ill-lit square. I had had enough of walking and wanted to get into a tram, but as usually happens nowadays, especially when one is in a hurry, the traffic had come to a standstill and no car appeared. Several people were waiting at the stopping-place where a constable, armed with a rifle, was standing on the edge of the pavement. I looked at my watch. The tram was due at five and it was already a quarter past. The constable cursed: "We might loaf here till midnight," said he, and shifting his rifle on his shoulder he started to walk off.

"Can I go with you?" I asked him. The man nodded and, taking two steps to his one, I walked along with him. "People will think you are locking me up," I laughed.

"We are going away from the police-station," he laughed back. "As a matter of fact it is wise of you not to walk alone here. People are often attacked. But it won't last. The old order will be restored. We shall soon rid the country of this Galician ministry." He began to complain bitterly, cursing the Government and all the various councils: "They ought all to be hanged, every one of them."

"Do tell me, how did you come to join the revolution?"

"I? A few bribed scoundrels misled us. We didn't know what we were doing."

When I left him I thought that the news that the police are drifting over to the counter-revolution must be true. It could hardly be otherwise, seeing that they are all brave, Hungarian, country-bred lads.

When I reached the meeting of the leading Protestant ladies I told them that so long as the various Christian creeds were fighting separately we should obtain nothing, but that if they joined hands they might still save the country, and they all decided to put all self-interest aside and to save whatever might still be saved. I felt that the unity which political parties were trying vainly to attain did already exist in the women's souls.

. . . .

January 7th-10th.

This wretched town is continually being convulsed by riots, and between the riots it howls and destroys, starves and robs. Its streets are peopled with Communist demonstrators who march about under the red flag. From the opposite direction comes a crowd of patriotic youths under the national flag, and the two crowds go for each other, tear off each other's emblems and break each other's heads. And while the crowd is openly turbulent, astonishing things happen in secret.

Mackensen has been surrounded by Spahis in Főth.

At dawn some French officers entered his room, made him a prisoner, and gave him half-an-hour in which to make his preparations, and then, before the sun rose, and without attracting attention, took him with his escort by car to Gödöllö. It is said that they are going to send him somewhere south. Károlyi's Government, although it is alleged that the arrest was made by the Government's request, has lodged a protest with the French. The organ of the Freemasons, *Világ*, remarked cynically that: "in the noise of great catastrophies the voice of little individual tragedies is lost . . ." Any tragedy is individual for them when it happens to gentile races, but whatever touches their race becomes a public calamity.

At noon another rumour spread over the town. Balthasar Láng, one of the props of the War Office, an old friend of mine, has been arrested.

Better news had been reaching us for some time. Counties in the north had begun to organise, and far from the treasonable Soldiers' Council, home-defence committees had been formed. The men folk of the north-western counties had stood to arms and opposed the advancing Czechs at Vágselye, but it had not come to a battle. As soon as the enemy heard that armed resistance was awaiting him, he turned in his tracks and retreated.

Hope rose. It would have been so easy for the armed Hungarian population to expel the intruders who refused to face a battle. Baron Láng was one of the organisers of this plan. It is said that the president of one of these home-defence committees, Szmrecsányi, spent the night before his departure at Láng's house, and that with traditional Hungarian carelessness he left his motor waiting all night in front of the house, so that the secret police of the Soldiers' Council got wind of his visit and reported the matter, and the Soldiers' Council insisted on action being taken. At the time, Count Alexander Festetich, Károlyi's brother-in-law, had been put at the head of the War Office to screen the little Jewish electrician who really ran the show, and this weak nobleman was obliged to have Láng arrested. He ordered him to appear before him, and had him detained on the spot.

It was the fate of one man only, but it affected so many . . .

The head of the Soldiers' Council, Pogány, and the leaders of the Social Democratic party had long ago decided the fate of any formal resistance ; they anxiously watched the organisation of measures for the country's defence. The Social Democrats had made it a special point that none but they should have any armed forces at their disposal. Károlyi and Festetich did not stand in their way in this matter, and the military administration withdrew all arms and munitions from the contingents which had risen patriotically in the country's defence. The trains carrying provisions for them were stopped by Pogány when ready to start; the troops fed themselves for a time at their own expense; but the Soldiers' Council of Pest would not have this either and sent a number of its agitators among them.

Suddenly, discipline began to slacken among the ranks; the soldiers dismissed their officers, raised the red flag, and withdrew without the slightest reason and left the country open to the invading Czechs, who became intoxicated with their easy success. After six thousand Hungarian soldiers had surrendered in Pressburg to one of their regiments, they crossed the Ipoly river at their ease and occupied the coal mines of Salgo Tarján. A detachment of forty men, without firing a shot, planted the Czech flag on the walls of the impregnable fort of Komárom . . .

These days have pierced the heart of the nation.

Now it is reported that the Czechs will not stop at the bend of the Danube. The only cowards of the World War, the perpetual traitors, are preparing to occupy Budapest, and nowhere do the bayonets of Hungarian soldiers advance, while Hungary melts away. They scatter without order, under the influence of that terrible eastern eye, which hypnotises our people and lures the unhappy nation to disgrace.

. . . .

January 11th.

The sky is dark and threatening. On the great national road which runs from the Carpathians to the heart of the country the bayonets of Czech soldiers are advancing on the capital, and now for the first time Bolshevist posters have appeared on the walls of Budapest. "The Hungarian Communist Party will hold a mass-meeting . . ." It was under the shadow of these ill-omened signs that, this morning, we unfurled the flag of the National Association of Hungarian Women.

In a house on the bank of the Danube, in the rooms of the Christian Socialist Party, lent for the occasion, we gathered together without informing the police. The *élite* of both the Catholic and the Protestant world of women was present. Among those who attended we observed with astonishment some of Károlyi's closest relations, who were asking their acquaintances why we had met and what we were driving at. Some uneasiness was shown, and to prevent it spreading Countess Raphael Zichy took the chair at once and opened the meeting. With a brevity which admitted of no interruption she communicated the purpose of the association and informed us of the agreement between the Protestant and Catholic camps.

Consternation was visible among the relations of Károlyi. Words of discord arose, obviously meant to destroy the unity which was a threat against the Government. When the president called on me to speak I felt that our cause was at stake, and heart and head alike were possessed with the same inspiration. I forgot that I was a stranger in the world of politics, that I had not prepared my speech, that I had never spoken at a great public meeting before; I only knew that our cause must prevail; and all my love for, all my despair over, our people cried out from my very soul, in my words.

"I see on the soil of Hungary two churches, Catholic and Protestant, and over them the Christian sky of Hungary stretches in eternal majesty. The soil on which they stand, the sky that is above them, are our country, our faith. Let these form the bond between us, my sisters . . ."

Till that moment I did not know what marvellous wings words possessed, but now I was carried away by my own words, and they carried the others with me to a point where our souls met.

" . . . We cannot walk separate paths, we who seek to walk the path marked out by Christ! Let us love one another and walk hand in hand, Christian women! Hand in hand!"

Eternal love and gratitude filled my heart at this moment, and my voice had more than mere words in it: " That which has never before happened in our country shall happen now—we, Protestant and Catholic women, shall be united this day, we whose sole desire it is that Hungary shall be Hungarian and Christian."

The objections of the ladies belonging to Károlyi's party were lost in the general acclamation, and the National Association of Hungarian women emerged from the obscurity of weeks of struggle and came out into the open as the counter-revolution of the women, in defence of their faith, their country and their homes.

. . . .

January 12th.

The papers that used to be Conservative published the news of our association and its manifesto, but made no comments on them.

I told Joseph Vészi, the editor-in-chief of the *Pester Lloyd*, that we were on the defensive and did not intend to attack. His sense of justice inspired him to say: "I shall publish your appeal, and I think it is natural that you should organise on a Christian and national basis, because Hungary was ruined by Jews—not by *the* Jews—but by Jews. Five hundred Jews . . . I say so, though I am a Jew myself."

I noted these words, not as a testimony to me, but as an admission!

I have no doubt that there are many Jews who think the same. But surely they do a great wrong to their own people by not branding such among them as " black sheep," especially at a time when they alone have the right to speak and protest in the interest of the country.

The Socialist press passed over the manifesto in silence.

When I started out a wintry storm was howling over the houses. Count Stephen Bethlen had convoked another meeting for five o'clock in the House of the

Franciscans. Up in the dark sky black clouds raced along like fearsome witches. Only a few street lamps were alight, and the rattling of their panes in the wind sounded as if their teeth were chattering. The whole town was thronging to the first mass-meeting of the communists. Above the houses the eternal flags were flapping wildly, their green and white parts so begrimed that now only the red was showing like a blotch of blood. In the dirty streets scraps of paper and dirt were whirled about, and the wind almost blew people off their legs.

When I came to the big mansion, which faces on to two streets, armed soldiers were standing at the entrance, with red cockades on their caps. They stared hard at me, and when I got inside I was told that there were soldiers at the other entrance too.

"They are watching us . . ."

Count Bethlen again raised the question of unity. "Foreign bayonets are marching on the capital; don't let it be said that we couldn't agree until we were under their very shadow."

Hours passed in hopeless, sterile discussion. All the time I could not help thinking how the socialists in the Workers' Council had by now practically joined forces with the Communists, and that while we were unable to come to an agreement they were probably howling in unison at their general meeting for the destruction of our country, faith and homes.

In all my life I was never more despondent. As a last hope I got up and said that the Christian women had already joined together, and that we were now all in one camp and only waiting to be able to join with the united parties.

"Long live the ladies!" shouted the whole room, but again nothing happened, and the meeting dispersed without having come to any decision—just like the time before.

When I left, the soldiers were no longer loafing near the entrance. A rabble crowded the streets, and an acquaintance whom I met said to me:

"Do you see this mob? It has come from the mass-meeting, where it has been listening to the Communists' speeches."

The meeting started as a demonstration and ended by becoming the occasion for the unfurling of the

Communist banner. At the request of Lieut.-Colonel Vyx the police had handed over nine Russian Bolshevik Jews to the French, and they had been expelled. A part of the population of Budapest now gets up a demonstration in favour of these nine foreigners, though it made not the slightest protest when Károlyi delivered several millions of Hungarians to the Czechs, Serbians and Roumanians. Jewish officers with red cockades organised the meeting, and the people of the ghetto were thronging there among disbanded soldiers, Galileist students, apprentices, and crazy women. The whole place was crammed with a human stream primed with hatred. The galleries creaked under their weight, and in the corridors a crowded-out throng shouted furiously.

On the platform the red phalanx of the Communist leaders surrounded Béla Kún, who opened the meeting and spoke of the revolution of the world's proletariat and the counter-revolution of the capitalist order, the two forces which, according to his materialistic views, are fighting a death struggle in Europe to-day. He attacked the Government because it had delivered up the red "comrades" and because it was hindering the westward advance of the Soviet Republic. Then he referred with enthusiasm to the struggle of the German Spartacists, speaking of them almost reverently.

"Long live the Spartacists, we're Spartacists too!" the soldiers shouted frantically: "we're all Bolsheviks!"

"Our first duty is to arm!" shouted Béla Kún. Then he bellowed into the hall: "Lenin makes an appeal to you through me!" At the mention of Lenin's name the whole gathering rose. Women applauded like furies. "Lenin sends you this message: 'change the war of imperialism into an international class-war!'"

Somebody shouted "Death to the Bourgeoisie!" and the whole hall took up the cry. Then there was an interruption. The Red soldiery would not allow Garbai, the Socialist leader, to speak. Béla Kún, shouting from the top of the table, tried to make order: "If a bourgeois came to speak here, I should be the first to say 'throw him out of the window;' but Comrade Garbai has come from the other camp of the workers, with whom we have yet to join up in our fight for freedom."

Comrade Garbai said something to the same effect: "The Socialists and the Communists agree on every point: their aims and their enemies are the same, but the time has not yet come."

Vágó shouted in a hoarse voice: "The Communists want no freedom of speech, no democracy; arm the whole proletariat, disarm the bourgeoisie, proclaim the Soviet Republic! . . ."

I thought of the meeting of Hungarian gentlemen I had just left.

The wind howled round me, the flags tore at their staffs and fluttered wildly over the dark streets; their folds became entangled and they struggled as if desperate hands were wrung above the people's heads.

. . . .

January 13th.

I have been working the whole day long, at work that is new to me. In the office of our Association I have been racking my brain with details of organisation. I drew up handbills and wrote innumerable letters, though I hate writing letters. In the evening we met in the Zichy palace and decided that in any event we would prepare a memorandum of protest on the part of the women, so that it should be ready when the missions of the Entente arrived. Count Klebelsberg brought forward a draft, ready for translation into foreign languages . . . Time passed, and we started home.

Nowadays it is rare to get a cab, and if one happens to meet one one may well say one's prayers before entering it. During the last spell of darkness a soldier climbed on to the box of a cab in which were two ladies. He and the driver were accomplices. The horses were whipped up and the cab was driven at a mad gallop through lonely suburban streets, towards the cemetery. Fortunately the ladies jumped out, and so escaped; but goodness knows how that night would have ended for them if they had not.

Countess Zichy sent me home in her own carriage.

Klebelsberg got out in the Inner town and I drove on alone. When we reached the Rákoczi Road all the street lamps were suddenly extinguished. The dark street gaped and swallowed us up.

There was shooting everywhere, and the horses became restless. I could feel that the coachman was frightened: indeed the night seemed full of terror. We arrived at a gallop at my house, and I saw that my mother's window was open. Regardless of the cold she was sitting at it waiting for me, and now called down to the coachman: "There is a riot near the Popular Theatre, don't go in that direction."

The man thanked her for the warning, and the clatter of hoofs died away in the opposite direction, turning so suddenly that it seemed the very horses were aware of the danger.

. . . .

January 14th.

Our destiny has been decided for us in secret, in whispers within the walls of Pest. And the houses where this whispering has been going on have paid the penalty: their grimy fronts are branded with the mark of the beast. The very customs and manners of the times are designed for the masses, and obtrude themselves like prostitutes in the street. Modesty and discretion no longer exist. It is probably for the same reason that the world of art and letters now produces only works meant for the masses. Epochs are known by their arts. Our age has posters—and viler, baser posters than those of to-day, whether on paper or in the shape of men, have never existed.

As I stepped out into the street this morning it did me good, after all the pasted-up horrors, to see the posters of the League for the Defence of Territorial Integrity, showing on a red background the split-up map of Hungary. This map showed the ancient kingdom cut up into five pieces, and in the midst of the provinces despoiled by Czecho-Slovakia, Yugo-Slavia, Roumania and Austria, there appeared the tiny little land that remains to us, a land incapable of existence, the plain deprived of its forests and its mines. And underneath, as though the crippled land, robbed of three million Hungarian sons, were crying out, three words were printed: "No, no, never!"

The streets, the houses, the walls proclaimed it, and after endless weeks I felt for the first time at home again in this town, which had denied everything that goes to make up my faith. Is Budapest recovering its sanity? My hope was suddenly torn to shreds. Near a bare tree of the boulevard a well-dressed young man bent down and scooped up some mud with his hands; then . . . he walked up to the wall and flung it all over the poster.

The blood rushed to my head. "How dare you!" I cried. The young man turned round. I shall never forget his face; it was drawn in Palestine two thousand years ago.

"What are you talking about? There's no such thing as 'my country,'" he said vindictively.

Instinctively I looked round—was there nobody to take this scoundrel by the throat? But the passers-by went on unheeding. I don't remember what I said, but I don't think I have ever felt so angry before. It was all so humiliating. I had never realised so clearly, so frightfully, what it was they wanted. No country! *They* have none, so they intend that we shall have none either.

Are the Jews going to outlive us too, because they will not die for the land? All my national instincts rebelled. They shall not outlive us! Their time will come. They are only mortal, for they want a country—they want *our* country. The life of peoples is like the life of individuals. They have their childhood, their youth, their manhood and their old age. Humanity has deprived the Jewish people of the flowering time of youth and manhood. Their race has aged unsatisfied while it has buried its contemporaries—Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians. It has seen Athens, Rome, and Byzantium die, though it was old when it stood at their cradles. Without contemporaries, alone, a stranger, it has remained among us, and it cannot yet die, for it must await its destiny. And now, even when the nations had begun to deal kindly with it, it celebrates its wasted flowering-time in a horrible dance of death.

The Wandering Jew paints his face young, and indulges in orgies on the edge of the grave.

January 15th-27th.

At the corner of a street I met a couple, a girl and a man. The fair face of the girl was familiar to me. She wore her hair after the Bolshevik fashion and her eyes stared curiously while she talked. Suddenly I remembered her: it was Maria Goszthonyi. She looked untidy, her boots were down at heel, her skirt was ragged and she wore no gloves though it was bitterly cold. Her companion had black gloves and was dressed entirely in black, and as he had black hair too he was a most mournful-looking object. His narrow shoulders bent forward and his back looked humped; he hadn't really got a hump, but his face gave one the impression of a hunchback as well. He was remarkably pale, and only his big, Jewish nose shone red in his face between his dark eyes. How did a girl like this come to be in his company?

They had passed me while I was still thinking of them and casually I noticed the name of the street I was in, Visegrad Street. The editorial offices of the *Red News* were in this street and it was a hotbed of Communists, who gathered here for their meetings.

I had heard a lot about Maria Goszthonyi lately. She had learned Russian within the last few years and had translated several Communist works, and under the influence of two Jewish friends, one of them the son of a rich banker, had professed Syndicalist principles. She had some trouble during the war because in the hospital in which she worked as a voluntary nurse she taught Communist doctrines to the wounded soldiers. It is also said that during the stormy days of October she made propagandist speeches in one of the camps of Russian prisoners. She had said one day to a friend of mine: "We shall soon be fighting over barricades in these streets." Since then she had often been seen with Béla Kún at Communistic meetings. The last time I had spoken to her she had been a mere child. Her parents had brought her up in their castle, carefully guarded, spoilt, and she seemed an artistically inclined, bright young girl. Her mother is patriotic and fond of music, and the best musicians used to stay at their house; her father runs a model farm.

How could a girl like that fall into the company of the Communists? There are epidemics of a spiritual nature too in this world! The war itself was one epidemic, and Bolshevism is another. There is a serious spread of the disease at Berlin at present. Its two most violent propagators have been killed, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and because the woman was the more gifted of the two and had a greater gift for hatred, her destructive spirit was more efficient than his. While Liebknecht organised the German Spartacists he was the link between the revolutionary Jews of Russia and Germany. These two combined with the criminal classes and stirred up the Berlin rabble against the townspeople, for they wanted civil war, and to be masters of ruined Germany. Now the rage of the mob has torn Rosa Luxemburg to pieces, and Liebknecht, who egged on others to face death while he hid under an assumed name, ran when his turn came to show courage—and was shot as he ran.

The Berlin papers said that neither of them knew the limit where political strife ended and criminal action began, but the Hungarian supporters of the Government wrote: "The fate of these two is perilously like to that of the Nazarene . . . This day two saints, with the halo of martyrs, have been enshrined in the history of communism . . ."

The whole existence, foundation, and teaching of communism is based on class-hatred, which means fratricide. Christ's teaching is love itself. There is no bridge over the gulf separating the two. His kingdom is not of this world, theirs is all of this world and brushes aside all that is not of this world. They take everything, He gave everything. The Nazarene died for them too, and now they crucify Him anew.

At the commemorative service organised by the Communists, Béla Kún and his comrades insulted the teachings of Christ. Foaming at the mouth, they pointed towards the portraits of Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht, carried about on poles, called on the crowd for vengeance and vomited such hatred as has never before been heard in this town. At first Béla Kún impressed the mob, then, all of a sudden, it turned against him. He shouted from the platform: "We too are threatened with their fate. But we vow that even if we are drawn and quartered we shall continue to walk along the road on which they led."

Somebody in the crowd shouted: "Are you going to walk when you've been drawn and quartered?" The crowd roared with laughter. It was no good after that to shout "Comrades, don't weep!" for nobody was weeping, and the speech, meant to produce revolutionary fury, burst like a soap-bubble over the people's head.

To-day it bursts, to-day they laugh. But on the quiet the Government is playing the Communists' game. A short time ago a Communist agitator, Tibor Szamuelly, was arrested on a charge of murder. A Lieutenant-Colonel, back from captivity, deposed that this man, who as a prisoner of war in Russia had been one of Trotski's confidants, had ordered the execution of a hundred and fifty Hungarian officers because they refused to join the Red guards. This Communist Szamuelly had not spent three days in prison when, at the intervention of Károlyi, the proceedings against him were quashed and he was released.

Another chink in the screen behind which the devilish work is being carried on.

CHAPTER XV.

January 25th-26th.

It almost seems as if the terrible eye of the magician who has kept the town in bondage is beginning to lose its power. The country tied to the stake is freeing its hands from its fetters and a great awakening is stirring over the Plain.

News pours in. The Roumanians have retired before the Székler bands, and on their retreat they are robbing and destroying, but Kis-Sebes and Bánffy-Hunyad are ours again, and they are packing up in Kolozsvár. The Hungarian forces have appealed to the War Office for help. This is the moment to act, for it is now easy to repel the invading foe. Transylvanian Magyardom has declared a general strike. All officials of state, post office, and telegraphs have stopped work, and thirty-two thousand miners have laid down their tools in sympathy with the patriotic movement. It *is* so, although the Government says that it is a victory for Social Democracy; but in Transylvania it is not the Internationale which is fighting, but a people patriotically defending its very existence.

The position of the Roumanians is becoming dangerous in Transylvania and their soldiers are beginning to desert and go home. It is as though the breeze of a new awakening is coming from over the snow-clad mountains and is blowing to flame the embers that have been smouldering all over the country.

If only the Government were to help now! But the Government won't. It stamps out the flames, strangles all words of patriotism and strikes the weapons from Hungarian hands.

The Jewish electrician, who is Minister of War, intends to leave the Hungarians of Transylvania to their fate and denounces the patriotism of our last reliable troops. When a detachment of the Budapest chasseurs went to Salgó Tarján he called it the glorious army of Social Democracy, and when the soldiers went off he said to them: "Go and defend our coal, our water, so that we may live." Only our coal, our water . . . there is no need to defend the country.

Those who speak and act in our name to-day are not Hungarians. This is a life and death struggle, a desperate fight between a people bled to death and a race that has been allowed to breed too freely—a new kind of war. A short time ago our defeat seemed certain: the Hungarian people made no resistance because its faith had been killed, but now the faith has revived. Its feeble flames had been carried quietly back into the homes by women. And perhaps the time has come at last when the men will want to prove their bravery to those who expect them to be brave.

. . . .

January 27th-February 3rd.

It is a good time for prophets just now. When life becomes unbearable and every moment a torture, in despair men snatch at prophecies and look to the future. Every day new prophets and prophetesses appear. Their oracles are published by the newspapers and spread by word of mouth. Fear longs to be alleviated. Somebody says "It is possible;" the next repeats it as "I believe;" and with the third it becomes "I know." The sufferers are not content to stop there, however, but proceed to fix a time-limit for the realisation of their predictions. At one moment they are concerned with the impending rising of the Communists, at another with the outbreak of the counter-revolution.

The beginning of the Red Revolution was predicted for to-day, but it has been postponed. Now it is fixed for the 5th of February. People comfort each other by saying that within two hours the Spahis stationed in the neighbourhood can be brought to town and that there is no need to be alarmed. Others have reliable information that on the 6th or the 9th our party will begin its long-prepared offensive. In the streets the *agents-provocateurs* of Pogány ask young men: "Are you thinking of the 9th of February?" then add in a whisper: "We meet to-night behind the Museum." And while the surface bubbles in this fashion, both we and they are doing really serious work in the depths below.

The young people in town are ready and so are the awakening Hungarians, the Széklers and the Transylvanian Hungarians. Our *liaisons* with the countryside are established. We have weapons and determination and are exasperated beyond endurance. But it is vital that all these organisations should start action at the same moment, for we must not waste our ammunition on sporadic shots; it must be a volley. One hour must strike for all of us.

There is great tension in the air. In Károlyi's camp they are conscious of our surreptitious preparations and Károlyi fears them more than the constantly increasing agitation of the Communists. The possibilities of our movement are more hateful to him and cause him more anxiety than the activity of Béla Kún, although the Communists are not particular what tools they use, and are now agitating quite openly. Here in the capital they are making use of a curious trick. From mid-January on, their street orators have been advising the mob not to pay any rent to the landlords on next quarter day, i.e., February 1st. Why should they? Are not the houses theirs? Fortunately the majority of the people kept their heads, and only about some twenty tenants in the suburbs refused to pay rent, so the riots and the projected Communist rising did not come off, for the present at any rate.

"It has failed this time," said John Hock, the President of the National Council, to one of my friends, "but the Red terror is bound to come in Hungary! It will last about two years, and then the old set, whom we kicked out in October, will have to restore order."

The recovery of Balassa Gyarmat from the Czechs sounded like the clatter of a sword among the vague prophecies and uncertainties of our present life. The sword was drawn by Aladár Huszár and George Pongrácz, and at the cost of many heroic lives a handful of brave railwaymen, artisans, and students, and the peasants of nine villages, drove the Czechs back over the Ipoly.

But this hope did not last. Under pretence of helping, Pogány rushed down there and frustrated the progress which the Czechs had failed to stop. After a flare-up, out goes the flame again. Hope was badly wounded yesterday in Fehérvár too, where there was a county meeting at the County Hall, which, at the proposal of Károlyi's own brother, passed a vote of lack of confidence in the present Government, demanded the re-establishment of the King and the immediate convocation of the old parliament. For those who were present this meant nothing but well-intentioned waving of hats and shaking of fists, but for the country, which was out for a real fight with the forces of destruction, it was a tragedy; for it gave the alarm to the Government, clinging to its ill-got illegal power. To-morrow it will be thirsting for vengeance, and I'm afraid that the preparation of the counter-revolution will meet with new difficulties.

People talk bitterly of the Fehérvár incident, where the idea seems to prevail that a counter-revolution ought to be started to the sound of bands, with the waving of flags and the beating of the big drum. If every remaining county of the country had convoked, secretly, however illegally, a general assembly for the same day, and all these had voted against the Government, then the result would not have been this miserable fiasco.

What has been the result? Károlyi has commissioned Joseph Pogány to crush every attempt at a counter-revolution, the country's Government delegates have been dismissed, officials have had to take the oath to the government or leave, and Károlyi's brother has had to climb down. Thus ends the affair so far as he is concerned, but for those who are working at the dangerous task of drawing the whole country into the meshes of the counter-revolution and of making its outbreak simultaneous everywhere, the consequences are disastrous. We shall have to start anew and build up what had been wantonly destroyed. One plan was that the county of Jász-

Nagy-Kún should proclaim a separate republic and secede from Károlyi's republic. This would have been the signal for the other counties to follow, leaving Budapest to itself and refusing to supply it with food, so that the starving town would have driven out its degrading tyrants of its own accord. But that is impossible now. A new way will have to be found, and the task will be heavy, for our enemies will be on the alert. At the last meeting of the Soldiers' Council Pogány proclaimed: "The revolution is in danger. Let the leaders and accomplices of the counter-revolution beware, for the well-meaning patience of the Soldiers' and the Workers' masses has been exhausted. As long as possible—patience; when necessity requires it—machine guns." And he gave orders to his secret police to search the houses of those implicated.

Yesterday Countess Louis Batthyány mentioned to me that she had written a confidential letter to her brother, Count Julius Andrássy, in Switzerland, and my thoughts flew to this letter when I heard this morning that houses were being searched in the town. If it were found! A Transylvanian friend telephoned to me early this morning and said: "I have had visitors, they will probably come to you too. You'd better make preparations, because they're very inquisitive; they even look up the chimney." Again I heard that curious buzzing sound in the telephone which has happened lately whenever I have been called up. I myself can never get a connection now-a-days, for though the exchange answers it never connects me. I wrote and reported this, and an electrician came and inspected the apparatus; apparently everything was in order, yet when I wanted to call up somebody the same thing happened again.

The exchange cut off the connection while my friend was speaking to me. I did not hesitate long. I took my papers and recent correspondence and burnt everything which could have betrayed our purpose, my friends or myself. I often used to wonder why precious letters and documents of certain periods had disappeared. There are many letters of Szécsényi, Kossuth and Görgei which might well have been preserved for posterity. And while I was burning the letters addressed to me, one by one, and throwing their ashes into the stove so that no trace might be left in the open fireplace, I understood why the political correspondence of dangerous times had disappeared. There are many other details of Hungary's stormy past which have become clear to me now. Among other things I understand why we have so few diaries and memoirs. For four hundred years our noblest spirits were watched by Austrian spies; and while in other countries innumerable hands recorded freely the lives of their great contemporaries, with us, at the best, only the great political declarations have been preserved. It was like this long ago, and now it is worse still, for worse and more impudent spies are about us now than the informers of the Austrian *regîme.*

When I had just finished my sad task I heard the bell in the ante-room. Then I remembered these notes. I snatched them up from my writing-table and hid them between my books. But it was only my Transylvanian friend arriving. Her face, always sad of late, wore a new expression. She looked round my room: "Have they been here too?" she asked, and then began to laugh. It was the laughter of a mischievous child who has escaped detection. "They found nothing at my place." she said laughing again. "They came early in the morning, with soldiers. I was still in bed, and they wanted to break in the door. I shouted that I was dressing and that a revolver was lying on my table, and meanwhile I threw into a portmanteau whatever I could think of —the list of names of the Széklers' National Council, the members' list of the National Association of Hungarian Women, and their pamphlets—and through an unguarded door the bag disappeared from my room. I didn't mind the police coming in then; they searched everything—me too—but they didn't find anything of importance."

In high spirits we went to the offices of the Association, where we found the secretary at her table, surrounded by a number of ladies. Practically everybody whose house had been searched that morning had come there and everybody had a different tale to tell. When they were searching Countess Batthyány's library a list of names fell out of a volume, a list of the lady patronesses of a ball held some years ago. They pocketed it promptly: it contained the names they were hunting for.

"How about the letter to Count Andrássy?"

"Fortunately the messenger came for it last evening. I shouldn't have liked them to lay their hands on that . . ."

The little office was filled with the spirit of winning gamblers. We concluded that the domiciliary visits had been a failure. I went home with my mind at rest. But that afternoon I had another visitor, Count Emil Dessewffy, whose house had been searched too.

"I'm glad you got over it without trouble," I said.

"Yes," said Dessewffy, "but,"—and he took his single eyeglass out of his eye, then replaced it suddenly—"but there has been a slight misfortune. The searchers found nothing implicating anybody. They took only one letter— yours!"

At first I did not know what letter he referred to. Then I remembered. I had written to Dessewffy in connection with the women's memorandum, when I had been knocked off the tram and was ill, and in it I had written about Kingship, about the crown. I had passed judgment on men and events and had mentioned and stigmatised Károlyi, Jászi, Hock, Kunfi, Pogány and the whole Social Democracy of Budapest, as being the protagonists of Bolshevik world-rule. I remembered that even when I sent the letter it occurred to me that if it fell into the wrong hands it would entail retaliation.

Dessewffy seemed more upset about it than I.

"Don't worry," I said, "at least they will know what I think of them."

. . . .

February 9th.

And they did know.

It happened quicker than I expected. From the hands of the Police my letter passed into those of the Socialist party's secretariat and thence to Joseph Pogány. I got reliable information of the whole thing—someone came to see me this morning. He asked me never to mention his name, and told me to be careful, as I was being watched and my telephone conversations listened to.

In town more and more requisitions are being made, and there have been many arrests, among others one of the leaders of the Awakening Hungarians, some officials of the War Office, the organisers of the armed force of the Territorial's Defence League, and Madame Sztankay, one of the bravest women of the counter-revolution; all have been sent to prison. The stone cast by the County meeting of Fehérvár has made wider and wider rings.

The Social Democrats are destroying with feverish haste everything that has been built up by generations of Hungarians. Jászi has dismissed the Rector and the Dean of the University, while Kunfi attacks the elementary and other schools. The teaching of religion is abolished, patriotism is banished from the schools, and the national anthem prohibited. The books used for the teaching of history in the schools are 'expurgated' of everything that entitled Hungarians to take a pride in their past, and while this is going on the head of the Budapest communal schools informs the teachers by circular that: "those who cannot, or will not, conform to the spirit of these times, must take the consequences and stand aside." It has all been done suddenly: the events of the last few days have urged the usurping powers to furious haste, and they are employing every possible shift to make sure of the future—for themselves.

Life becomes more and more difficult every day, and more and more people are taking refuge abroad. The rich Jews have long ago sent their treasures out of the country and have gone into safety themselves. It is amusing and characteristic that Countess Károlyi's pearls have emigrated too, and it has even been said of Károlyi himself that, under the pretence of furthering the peace negotiations, he also would like to go to—safer climes. But the powers of the Entente informed him that they had no wish to negotiate with him.

The mined ground trembles—anywhere is safer than here.

Count Ladislaus Széchenyi and his wife came to take leave of me, and at this parting I was conscious of the fate which they were escaping and which still hangs over me. My heart was heavy; Countess Széchenyi, who used to be Gladys Vanderbilt, had been for years one of my dearest friends, and now the town will seem empty without her. "I shall do everything that is possible, out there, for Hungary . . ." she told me consolingly. I knew she would, for, though she was foreign born, in the hours of our greatest trials she was more patriotically Hungarian than many of her companions who were Hungarian by birth.

"God speed you, Gladys . . . shall we ever meet again?"

I got out of their carriage at a street corner and we took leave in the street. It was raining, and I suddenly felt as if myriads of thin, cold, slimy cobwebs were surrounding me and holding me captive, while their carriage broke through the threads of rain and disappeared before my eyes . . . They are gone . . .

I looked out of the window, and outside the snow was now coming down in big flakes. It is falling heavily, deep soft snow, for many, many miles around, covering the roads which lead to happier countries.

How I yearned for far-away things—roads, free roads, beauty, music, peaceful nights, warm rooms! . . . It lasted but an instant, and then I shook it off; I had to go to the other shore of the Danube, where, in a dark house, behind drawn curtains, in an unwarmed room, women were waiting for me to address them.

Off I went, and behind me, just a step behind me, there came the new law. From this day on, any person attempting to change the republican form of Government is liable to fifteen years' hard labour; the instigators and leaders of such a movement will go to penal servitude for life. But those who report matters in time shall go free and be duly rewarded.

A white whirlwind swept over the frozen Danube. I went on. The road was long . . . the law followed and caught me not.

. . . .

February 10th.

The door of my room opened quietly, and the little German maid looked in frightened.

"They've come again. I have tried to send them away, but they won't go . . ."

This is quite the usual thing nowadays. I jumped up from my writing-desk and went across the cold drawing-room. There was no lamp in the ante-room, and in the gloom I saw two soldiers and a civilian near the door.

"What do you want? Me? From the Housing Office? But you have been over our flat before!"

They refused to be denied. Fortunately my mother was out of the way and did not meet them while they were looking over the place. When we reached my room the civilian produced a note-book and bent over it in the lamplight on the writing-table. For some minutes he searched for something in his book, then turned to me suddenly with suspicion in his eyes:

"Is this your room?"

"Yes."

"We come from the police. We must search it."

An unpleasant tremor went through me.

"By what right?" I was on the point of asking, but I thought better of it. I remembered the hidden silver. The best thing would be to show no opposition—"After all, if those are your orders . . ." and I handed him my keys. One went in this direction, another in that, and I had to keep my eyes on the hands and pockets of all three. Meanwhile I remembered with extraordinary rapidity everything I had forgotten to burn. In awful anguish I thought of these notes, behind the books. What if they found them? I was thinking so intently about this that I was afraid they might read my face. Suppose my thoughts were to guide them! . . . One of the soldiers looked into the stove and at the same moment I caught sight of the other extracting cigarettes from a small box and stuffing them into his pockets. The civilian sat down at the table and pulled out a drawer.

"Do you know anything about the organisation of the counter-revolution?"

"Yes," I answered . . . "I got it from the columns of 'The People's Voice.'" (this is the Socialist's own paper.)

The stupid round eyes of the man stared at me and suddenly I began to feel dangerously gay. I took heart and was almost grateful to them for being so conveniently superficial. Why not give them all my cigarettes? What nonsense! I pulled myself together and straightened my face.

A bundle of letters lay on my table and the man took them up one after the other. Then he turned the pages of a little book which mother had been reading yesterday, Albach's *Heilige Anklänge.* Suddenly I was seized with disgust. I wanted to be rude. How dare these strangers touch my things like this and obliterate the contact of beloved hands! They come in, open the cupboards, fumble, search, and all this in "the golden age of the people's liberty," just because I am Hungarian.

When the three varlets left after searching in vain I felt hopelessly tired. I opened the window and kept it open all the evening just to air the room.

. . . .

February 11th-13th.

Even in my dreams my worries pursue me. I know it, because when I wake with a start I find myself planning, planning, planning. Why can I never rest in peace?

How people's minds alter nowadays! In October it was all dazed depression. In November black despair. In December something that was distantly akin to hope. Then came the period of words, I made speeches, spreading my own fire. Later the order of the day was action. Now the sphere is more restricted. We must do something, quickly, unanimously, because if we don't act they will, and all that the Hungarian politicians do is to hold meetings, consult, think of their party, of themselves; even in this awful storm it is impossible to create unity. Don't they feel how they have sinned in the past against the nation? Don't they realise that they owe it reparation?

Count Stephen Bethlen's plan, the idea of a great, national collaboration, has suffered shipwreck after a lot of talk. Instead of unfurling the great flag of unity the number of little flags has been increased by one: the camp of Bethlen has been isolated from the others.

The Hungarian people are snipping tiny flags from the three national colours, while against them the Internationalists hoist a single flag dipped in blood, and round us, over all our frontiers, the Czechs, Serbians and Roumanians pour in, each united under its own single banner.

In this great, hopeless discord, the women, be it said to their honour, have found a bond of union, not only in the capital but in the country-side too. The post-office refuses to forward our appeals, but they are carried by hand by brave women, honest railwaymen, and engine drivers. Hidden in villages, terrorised towns, in hundreds and hundreds of families, there flickers the little flame that we have lit . . .

It is this which angers and worries the usurpers. The great eastern eye whose spell has been unable to subdue us, watches us wickedly. Wherever we go, it follows us, spies on us, threatens us. The other day when I was at the house of a friend, armed soldiers took possession of the staircase, a watch was placed in her ante-room, and finally the place was searched.

In our home too we get a queer lot of visitors. Yesterday two soldiers wanted to come in. The maid, whom I have forbidden to open the door to anybody, asked them what they wanted. They enquired whether this was not an office, and whether we had the telephone laid on. The girl answered through the closed door that this was her ladyship Madame Tormay's flat, not an office.

"There are no more ladyships," they shouted back. The girl went away and left them there, and for a long time they continued ringing and knocking the door.

This morning when I went to say good morning to my mother I found a young Jew in uniform standing at the door of my room. We never discovered how he got in.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"I have come to requisition lodgings."

At this I lost all control over myself.

"Enough of that," I exclaimed. "Clear out!"

He looked at me rather frightened, and began to stutter.

"There is not a day that you don't intrude here," I went on. "This is our home, all that is left to us. Leave it alone!"

He collected his papers quickly and went away. I had a presentiment afterwards that this young man would give us trouble for having been shown the door, so I went to my mother and told her what had happened. She laughed and replied, "I showed one the door the other day too." That decided me to go to the Housing Office and to obtain, somehow or other, protection for our house.

After a fight I managed to get on a tram. At this time the Housing Office under the direction of the Social Democrat Garbai had already taken up its quarters in the House of Parliament, where the Lords used to sit.

The beautiful marble staircase of the House of Parliament was indescribably dirty. Its walls were besmeared with coloured pencil scrawls, and red inscriptions defiled the columns, such as "Long live the republic!" "Long live Social Democracy!" All their offices are like that. Public buildings sink with incredible rapidity into this dirty state. I have not been there myself but was told by people who have that the royal castle, the so called national palace, is as unswept and filthy as a railway station in the Balkans. In the small drawing-room of Maria Theresa cigarette ends and sausage skins litter the floor. The beautiful old stoves are nearly burst with the coal that is crammed into them, the walls around them are stained with smoke, the valuable old tables are covered with ink blotches, and at them our new administrators sit in their shirt sleeves.

I stood hesitating for a moment in the bespattered corridor of the House of Parliament. People rushed past me, but nobody could give me any information, so I knocked at a door haphazard and entered an untidy office. A tall unkempt man was bending over a writing-table, a fat one stood beside him, and there were some others lounging about. They sent me away, so I went into the next room, and found the same type of people, who spoke to me just as sharply and also sent me away. Corridors, ante-rooms, offices, offices and offices again, and everywhere the same type of face—as if they had all been cast in the same mould.

I went on, though I now began to feel uncomfortable, and very lonely; I felt as though I had been abandoned among these strangers. It was only then that I realised what was happening in the public offices of Hungary. My discomfort changed into fear, and I began to run but could not find my way out. My head began to reel, and I staggered out into the corridor. The stairs were opposite me, and I rushed down them and met a commissionaire at the bottom. He was Hungarian, the only Hungarian I had yet met in the whole place.

"Where is the Treasury?" I asked him. I had a friend in that office, which was the reason I was looking for it.

The commissionaire looked at me in astonishment; I must have looked rather queer.

"Yes?—there? . . . Thank you!" and I rushed on. I passed through an ante-room and then I found myself among friends.

"What has happened to you? You are as white as a sheet."

"I got lost among the many new offices. I was sent from one room to another, and everywhere the same faces glared at me. All the rooms of the House of Lords are full of them. They have overrun every inch of the House of Parliament. Our people are nowhere. Good God, are those people in sole possession everywhere?"

"Everywhere . . ." came the gloomy answer. I buried my face in my hands, and wept bitterly.

. . . .

February 15th-18th.

I have just heard the true reason why the Archduke Joseph took the oath of allegiance to the National Council. Michael Károlyi, Count Theodore Batthyány and Kunfi went to him, and Károlyi pledged his word that he would hand the command of the army over to the Archduke if only he would take the oath. At that time this would have meant the saving of the nation: the armed forces in the hands of Archduke Joseph. The Archduke made the sacrifice and took the oath. But those who have lied as no men have ever lied in this world before, who have cheated the country with the stories of their friendship with the Entente and their loyalty to the King, who have cheated the nation and the army with their promises of a good peace—they cheated the Archduke Joseph too. While they were taking his oath of allegiance at the Town Hall the army which they promised him was being shattered by Linder in front of the House of Parliament.

All lies . . . But lies are like a bridge without banks to support it, which must break down . . .

The friend who had warned me before of impending peril came again. He entered cautiously and looked round continually while he was speaking.

"Look out," he said in a whisper. "Give up all your activities, give up this organising; you are being watched with grave suspicion. It would be a pity if they took you. I like your books: you will still be able to go on writing beautiful things if you take care. But you won't if you go on like this. There are many of us who would dig you out of a grave with their bare hands, but *they* will get you into one. Joseph Pogány said yesterday 'We will settle Cécile Tormay's little business.'"

I thanked him for the advice, knowing all the time that I should not follow it. Destiny decides people's fate when it puts patriotism into their hearts. The more of it it gives, the harder their fate.

In the evening I overheard from my room a curious conversation on the telephone. Our housekeeper was telephoning to her *fiancé*, who, she tells me, is a chauffeur. She is a good-looking woman, and in January she left our service over a question of wages, but a short time later asked to be taken back, although we could only raise her salary slightly. At the time I didn't see anything very remarkable in that; but since I have heard this conversation over the telephone I have begun to wonder what her reason for coming back could be. This is what she said:

"Hello, hello, is that you? Back again? No engine trouble? Yes. In Kiskúnhalas too! . . . And you took many arms, machine guns too? Did you catch them? Officers, you say?"

I was rather alarmed. So they had captured one of the arsenals which the counter-revolution had established in the country. I feared for the safety of the others. Only later did I think of ourselves. Who was this woman's *fiancé?* Whose chauffeur was he? My suspicions were aroused. But the time when one can dismiss a servant is past, unless it be the servant's good pleasure to go. I remembered letters I had asked her to post, which never reached their destination. I also remembered that whenever I receive visitors she crosses the ante-room as if accidentally. Is it accidental? I must watch her . . . As I stood pondering she came and stood in the doorway with a letter in her hand.

"It's very confidential," she said, looking at me rather queerly. "The man who brought it wanted to deliver it into your own hands only."

"Some beggar, I suppose" . . . I replied indifferently; but I could see that she did not believe me.

The envelope contained an invitation. To-morrow afternoon Count Stephen Bethlen's party will be formed at last.

. . . .

February 19th.

We walked fast, in Indian file, through the rain-swept streets. From the dilapidated gutters of the houses the water poured here and there on to our necks. The shop windows were empty. Soaked red posters screamed from the walls: "To-morrow afternoon we must all be in the streets."

"This means that we had better not," I said when, opposite the Opera, we got into the finest street in Budapest. The wooden pavement was full of holes ankle-deep in water, for at night our respectable citizens fetch wood from this pavement for their fires.

Everything visible is bleak and shabby, and outside the town the whole country is in the same state. The Czechs have annexed Pressburg, and they turned the protest meeting of its inhabitants into a bath of blood. A little boy climbed a lamp-post and tried to stick up a tiny Hungarian flag. The Czech soldiers shot him down as if he were a sparrow, and little paper flag and little boy fell together on the pavement. The embittered crowd then attacked the soldiers with their bare hands; the soldiers called for reinforcements and began a regular massacre from street to street. When Colonel Baracca, the Italian commander of the Czech garrison, attempted to get his men back to the barracks they broke his head with the butts of their rifles. And as the Czechs behave in the highlands, so do the Serbians down in the plain, and worse than both, the Roumanians in Transylvania. They flog ladies, priests, old men, in the open street. They hang and torture, cut gashes into the backs of Hungarians, fill them with salt, sew the bleeding wounds up, and then drive their victims with scourges through the streets. Meanwhile the voluntary Székler and Hungarian battalions are appealing in vain for help from the War Office, so that they may at least save their people. But William Böhm and Joseph Pogány refuse it, Károlyi makes speeches on pacificism, and Béla Kún proclaims class war in the barracks of Budapest.

There is dynamite underground. We hear stifled explosions every day. It was in this charged atmosphere that Count Bethlen made his declaration concerning his party's policy.

CHAPTER XVI.

February 20th-22nd.

As one looks back on distant days they seem to melt into one like a row of men moving away, and yet they passed singly and each had its own individuality. Long ago the days smiled and were pleasant, now all that is changed. One day stares at us, frigid, relentlessly, another turns aside, and one feels there is mischief in its face; some of them look back threateningly after they have passed by.

Such are the present ones. When they have passed they still look back at us and mumble something that sounds like "there is worse to come." We refuse to believe it, our common-sense revolts against the prophecy, because our common-sense has come to the end of its power of enduring misfortune. Even jungles come to an end, and if they do not we tear a path through the tangle of their thorns, tread them down, and, at the price of whatever wounds and loss of blood, regain the open country.

The masses have lost their illusions concerning Károlyi's republic, for they are colder and hungrier than ever. History always reaches a turning point when there is no more bread and misery becomes past endurance. Logically there must be a change, and what change could there be but the resurrection of the country? Hope, which has come to naught, must become a reality in March . . . At any rate we flatter ourselves with this belief, so that we may find strength for life and work though the streets whisper a different tale, nay, sometimes they shout it aloud, and last Thursday they baptised it with blood to prove that they meant it.

Béla Kún's staff has called the work-shirking rabble together. One day they stir the people up against the landlords, next day they agitate among the disbanded soldiers to induce them to raise impossible claims; to-day it was the turn of the unemployed.

Potatoes are rotting in the ground and last year's maize cannot be gathered. There is nobody in the town to sweep the streets, to cart the garbage, to carry a load. At the railway station starving officers do porters' work. The evicted officials of occupied territories hire themselves out as labourers on farms. Meanwhile at their meetings the Communists court the idle rabble: "You have lost your jobs in consequence of the terrible bath of blood; the time has come to get your own back; up, to arms!"

So the mob went to Visegrad Street, where Béla Kún and his friends stirred it up still more and finally provided it with arms. With wild screams the furious crowd thereupon poured out into the boulevard, armed women, young ruffians with hand-grenades. "Long live Communism," rose the shout. Somebody exclaimed: "Let's go to the 'People's Voice!'" And the crowd, which had learned from the Socialists how to sack the editorial offices of Christian and middle-class newspapers, went on to storm the offices of the all-powerful organ of Social Democracy. The destructive instinct knows no bounds. The alarmed secretariat of the Socialist party appealed for help to the police and the armed forces, but before the sailors and the people's guard had reached the street its pavement was covered with blood. Fifty constables awaited the crowd in a street; shots fired by the mob were the signals for a mad fusillade; from windows and attics machine-guns were trained on the unfortunate police and a shower of hand-grenades fell on the building of the 'People's Voice.' It was a well prepared battle, the first real test of the Communists' power.

It failed . . . The Communist leaders remained in the background, and the rabble, left to itself without guidance, abandoned the field with such a bloody head that all desire for further fighting has gone out of it for the present. It is said that the dead in this street battle numbered eight, and that over a hundred injured had to be admitted to hospital.

It was late in the evening and we could still hear wild firing going on in the direction of the fight. Even late at night occasional rifle shots were heard. Then came the news in Friday's papers that at daybreak the Communist leaders had been arrested. Szamuelly's room was found empty; on the table lay a piece of paper and on it was written: "Dear Father, don't look for me; there is trouble, I must fly." Most of the others were captured: Béla Kún was taken in his flat, and at the prison the policemen, infuriated by the death of their comrades, beat him within an inch of his life, indeed he only saved it by shamming death, and the constables left him in his cell without finishing him off.

In consequence of the attack on the 'People's Voice' the Social Democratic party declared a general strike. All work was forbidden, the traffic stopped in the capital's main streets, the shop shutters put up, and even the cafés and restaurants were closed. The town looked as if it had gone blind; all along the streets closed grey lids covered its eyes of glass. There was no traffic at all. All vehicles had disappeared, and nothing but machine guns passed along the roads. At the various corners of the boulevards soldiers lounged beside their piled rifles.

There were processions everywhere. I met one group, advancing under a red flag and consisting of well over a thousand people, most of them wearing white aprons smeared with patches of blood. They swung huge axes, knives, and choppers over their heads, and all were covered with blood. They looked as if they had murdered half the town, and wherever they went they shrieked: "Long live the proletarian revolution!"

"Who are these kindly people?" I asked a hag with the face of a witch, who was cheering them enthusiastically from the pavement.

"The butchers' guild," she said proudly; "Social Democrats, every one of them . . ."

Nor were the Communists idle. Armed bands of them threatened the police stations and prisons, supporting their demands with hand-grenades and clamouring for the immediate release of their leaders and the delivery into their hands of the constables who had beaten Béla Kún.

"THERE WERE PROCESSIONS EVERYWHERE."

Meanwhile something was going on in the dark. The tone of the Social Democratic press has changed suddenly and now the Government threatens the counter-revolution with more vehemence than before, asserting that the formation of a new party by Count Stephen Bethlen is a more sinister crime than the murderous attempts of the Communists. With a sharp change of attitude, 'The People's Voice' asks for the punishment of the constables who ill-treated Béla Kún, and writes threateningly of Bethlen's party and the National Association of Hungarian Women: "Through the one of them the men, through the other the women raise their voices, and because the revolution has not yet made use of the gallows, they give as shameless and impudent an accent to their appeals as if the gallows were absolutely excluded from among the weapons of defence the revolution might use . . ."

And while the official paper of the Social Democrats writes like this, the evening paper, *Az Est*, which for the last few months has boasted of having been the principal agent in preparing and bringing about the October revolution, now seeks to inspire the minds of its readers in favour of another revolution by exciting sympathy and pity for Béla Kún.

Every day the attitude of the Government becomes less comprehensible. It is openly said in town that Károlyi is in communication with the Communists. He telephoned orders that the leaders should be well cared for in prison, and then sent messages to them through his confidants, Landler and Jeszenszky, and made his wife pay them a visit. Countess Michael Károlyi, accompanied by Jeszenszky who is called Károlyi's aide-de-camp, went to see Béla Kún in the prison to which he had been transferred. She actually took him flowers, and saw to it herself that the arrested Communists were provided with spring mattresses, feather beds, blankets, good food, and tobacco.

Károlyi, the guilty megalomaniac, becomes more and more of an enigma. He wanted to rule; to attain power he had to ruin poor, befooled Hungary and make an alliance with every enemy of the country. It was cruel logic, disgraceful, but it was logic. But that he should now ally himself with the enemies of his own power seems to indicate softening of the brain. And this same feeble-mindedness manifests itself daily in all his declarations and pronouncements in a more grotesque shape, in him as well as in his wife. The stories about them become more and more extravagant.

The other day he had a kinematograph film taken of his projected entry into the royal castle, yet dares not have it exhibited. He had a stage erected, red carpets were laid, lacqueys in court livery stood in a row, and he made his state entry with his wife, assisted by some actors. Something went wrong with the film, so they started anew and played the whole comedy over again.

Then there is the tale about Countess Károlyi's attempt to play the ministering angel. She had the royal table linen cut to pieces, and the stiff, hard damask with the royal arms and crown on it was sent to proletarian infants to be used as pilches!

The other day the military band was playing in St. George's square. It struck up the 'Marseillaise.' As if by magic, a window of the Prime Minister's residence opened, and Countess Károlyi leaned out and waved her hand. Then the band began to play the Hungarian national anthem; Countess Károlyi retired at once and shut her window in a hurry.

Receptions are organised up in the castle. Real Hungarian society, which lives in retirement, practically in mourning, has severed all contact with the Károlyi's; but they have found a remedy for this. Their receptions are reported in the newspapers, and among those mentioned as being present are people who cut them in the street. The other day, to my consternation, I found my own name in one of the lists, but when I tried to protest through the press no newspaper would print my letter.

A few days ago Károlyi gave a state dinner in honour of two Italian gentlemen, who, as simple private individuals, had come to visit some relations here; it surpassed everything that bad taste had ever produced. The country is in mourning, there is no coal, and in many houses people lack even candles and oil; yet the castle was a blaze of light. The ministers of the republic were present with their wives, and dinner was served in the hall where the

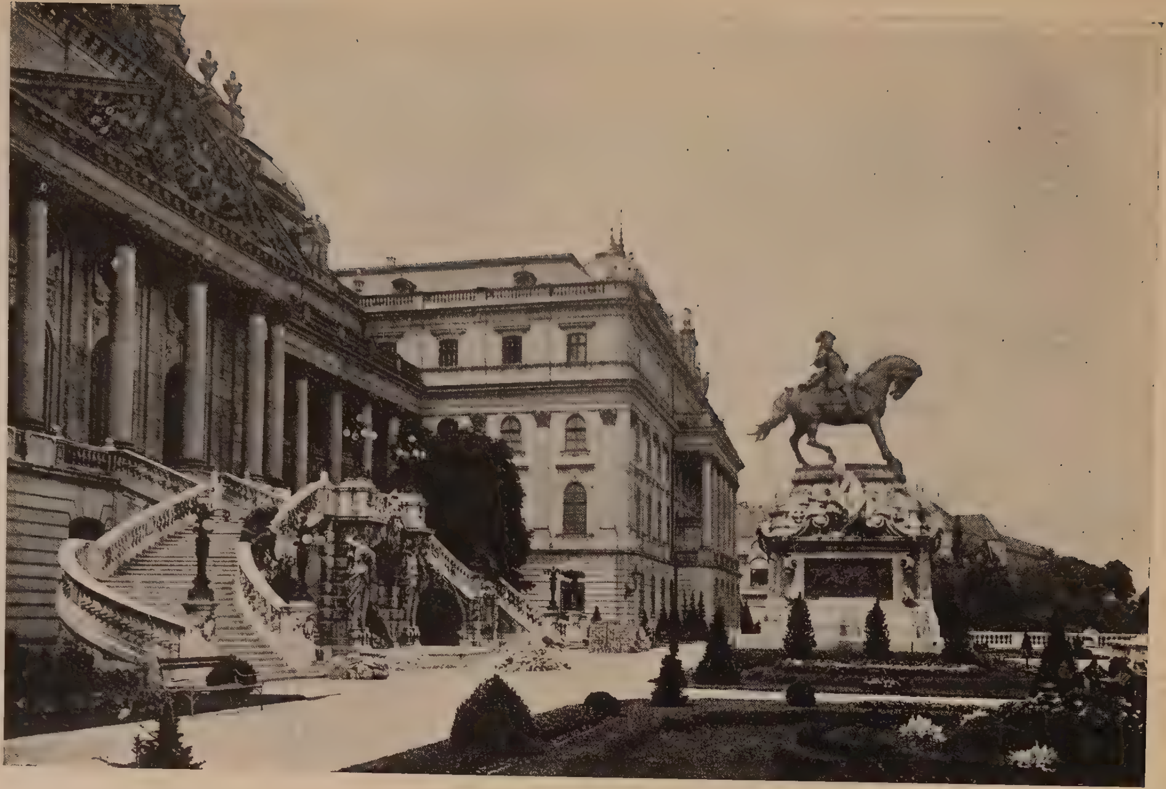


Photo. Erdelyi, Budapest.

THE ROYAL CASTLE, BUDA,

WITH THE STATUE OF PRINCE

picture of the coronation of 1867 is hanging. The table was covered with linen bearing the monogram of Francis Joseph, and the plates were marked with the royal crown. Thus, in the royal castle, among the memories of kingship, on royal plate, the so-called president of the republic entertained the astonished foreigners who had expected to be the guests of a Hungarian nobleman and found that they had fallen in with a ridiculous parvenu. They related their adventures next day and carried the story back to their own country as a huge joke.

The Károlyi's have parted with everything that could support them. It is said of them that they gave asylum to Szamuelly, the murderer of Hungarian officers, when he escaped the other day. Michael Károlyi started his career with lies, continued it with dishonour, and now has landed in the mire. If he is not stopped somehow it is likely that he will drag the whole nation down with him.

* * * * * * * *

February 23rd.

Past midnight. I said good-night to my mother; the street is silent, and my room is cold.

How often have I, at this table, imagined destinies that existed only in the author's mind, and while I wrote the story brought the children of my fancy to very life! But now life is harder than the destinies which I ever imagined, and more than once of late my real existence has seemed to me like some fantastic tale, beheld from the outside, as though at a distance . . .

This morning the newspapers have published a new law just passed by the Government to oppose all attempts at a counter-revolution. It empowers the Government to put 'out of harm's way' any one who is, in their opinion, dangerous to the achievements of the revolution or to the popular republic. This means that anyone of us who is obnoxious in their eyes can be arrested without any further preliminaries.

It was about midday when my telephone, which has been mute for a long time, raised its voice. A cousin of mine was speaking, and her voice, though she was obviously making efforts to appear calm, was excited.

"Knöpfler would like to speak to you. Important —Urgent."

"Why doesn't he come here, then?"

"He cannot come now. Mother-in-law keeps an eye on him. Come to us, we will meet in the street."

She put the receiver down. Among ourselves we always refer to the police as 'mother-in-law.'

I wonder what has happened. What has Gömbös, the leader of the Awakening Hungarians, to tell me? (Knöpfler is his *nom de guerre.)* I saw in the paper yesterday that on the proposal of the Minister of War the Government had decided that his society should be dissolved.

I never leave home without saying good-bye to my mother. "Come home early," she said when I took leave. I was going to lunch with some relations. My mother knew this, and yet she seemed anxious.

"I needn't go if you don't want me to. I can make some excuse."

"No, you just go along," she said, and her expression changed suddenly. "You know, it does us old people good to be alone sometimes. Then we are with our own contemporaries who are no more. You go along to your own contemporaries who are still here."

She said this so sweetly that it made me feel as if a solitary Sunday dinner were a treat for her. She achieved her end, I went with a lighter heart.

A cold wind blew down the street. My cousin and her husband came to meet me, and a short distance behind them Gömbös followed. "We'll go a few steps with you," they said, and Gömbös came to my side.

"The cabinet council decided yesterday," he whispered, "to intern us. Count Bethlen, Colonel Bartha, Bishop Count Mikes, Wekerle . . . and you."

Again I had that feeling that it did not concern me, and I listened indifferently.

"Károlyi is at Debrö and the warrant lies on his table waiting for his signature. Well, what do you think of it?"

"Nothing," I answered, and was surprised to find how little it affected me; "I am just thinking who will carry on in our place."

They went with me for a short distance and then we parted. I walked across the town, for I wanted to be alone and think: I had to make plans and arrange my affairs for all eventualities. A thousand questions crowded into my mind, and yet I found no time to take any decision, because I was thinking all the while of my mother, and of her only.

When I told my hosts, over the coffee, the news I had just received, their faces seemed to reflect the danger that stood behind me.

Evening was drawing in when I reached home. As I stepped into the ante-room the telephone bell rang, and when I answered it a friend spoke to me in the secretive way that has now become habitual.

"The dressmaker has come with the new fashion papers. She is going straight to you, please don't leave home until you have seen her."

A few minutes later her husband arrived. He had heard it at his club . . .

"You will probably be arrested to-night. What are your plans? Your friends, I understand, don't want to escape."

"I shall stay too," I said, and thanked him for his kindness. Meanwhile, my brother Géza had arrived, then a friend and his wife, and finally Gömbös.

It was now nearly ten o'clock. My mother called me: supper had been waiting on the table for a long while. The others had already supped, so I left them and joined my mother. I ate rapidly, and she watched me closely.

"What is going on here? Why have they come? Is anything wrong? Don't hide things from me."

I tried to reassure her, though I saw clearly she did not believe me. She sighed. "Well, go along to your friends, but don't keep them too late."

Soon they rose to go with the exception of Gömbös.

"It has been decided by the others," he said, "that none of you will flee. They only send me . . I shall help from abroad."

We fixed up everything. Gömbös rose, took his society's badge from his button-hole: an oak wreath on white ground with 'For the honour of our country' on it, and handed it to me. "Take this as a souvenir, nobody has a better right to wear it than you."

"God bless you; if we live I am sure we shall hear of you," I said at the door.

They left me and I heard the street door shut. I wondered whether anyone was lying in wait for him, down there in the dark, and listened for a time at the window, but the steps went undisturbed down the street.

I went to my mother. I don't remember ever having seen her so excited. "Now why don't you tell me?" she cried. "I know that something has happened."

"Gömbös came to take leave; he is flying the country."

I changed the subject as soon as possible. We chatted a long time and by and by she calmed down. Or did she only pretend, for my sake? No, she never showed anything but what she felt.

Slowly the clocks struck midnight. And here I am sitting at my writing-table and, instead of imagining destinies, am occupied by my own. Who knows whether I shall still be free to write to-morrow what I leave unwritten to-day?

I packed the most necessary things into a small valise. Again the clocks struck: they are knocking at the gate of the morrow.

. . . .

February 24th.

The news of the internments has spread all over the town. I was afraid my mother might hear from someone else what was in store for me, so I decided to tell her myself. She is not one of those whom one has to prepare for bad news. When I told her, she went a little pale, and, for a time, held her head up more rigidly than usual. But her self-control never left her and she remained composed. She blamed nobody and did not reproach me for causing her this sorrow.

"You did your duty, my dear; I never expected anything else from you." More approval than this she had rarely expressed.

I remained at home the whole afternoon, sitting with my mother, and we talked of times when things were so very different from what they are now. If the bell rang, if the door opened or steps approached, I felt my heart leap. In the afternoon a motor car stopped in front of the house. For a time it throbbed under our window . . . Had it come for me?

We have come to this, that in Hungary to-day those who dare to confess to being Hungarians are tracked down like game. In the Highlands it is the Czechs, in Transylvania the Roumanians, in the South the Serbians, and in the territory that remains to us it is the Government who persecutes the Hungarians.

The bell . . . Nothing, only a letter. Those who have never tried it cannot imagine what it feels like to have ceased to be master of one's freedom and to be waiting for strangers to carry one off to prison.

I spent the evening with my mother and, as of old, I followed her if she went from one room to another: I did not budge from her side. After supper I showed her a packet of letters which I wanted her to hide among her own things, so that they might not be found if there was another search. The letters had nothing to do with politics: they were old, far-away letters which one never reads again yet does not like to burn, because it is comforting to know that they still exist—dead letters of past springs. I should have been horrified if rough strange hands had touched them.

"Put them there," my mother said and pointed to the glass case with the green curtains. As I pushed the little packet in at the back of the highest shelf I noticed a big box with a paper label on it. Written on it in her clear handwriting was "Objects from the old china-cabinet."

"May I have a look at these?" I said. She nodded.

It was as though I had received all the desires and forbidden toys of my childhood; I pressed the box against me. Then we put our heads together over the table, in the light of the shaded lamp . . . Suddenly the high white, folding doors of the old house where I had spent my childhood opened quietly, mysteriously, one after the other, and as by sweet magic I saw again the old room of long ago and the china cabinet near the white fire-place, under the old picture in the gilt frame . . .

Slowly and carefully we unwrapped the little objects that had slept so long in their tissue paper. My mother had packed them away when we had come here and when there was no room in the smaller china cabinet of our diminished dwelling. Since then I had never seen the treasures of my childhood, and as the years went by they lay enshrined and undisturbed in my memory.

The tiny Marquis de Saxe held up his white bewigged head; there was my great-grandfather's snuff box, which could play a tinkling little tune; the Empire lamp in pseudo-Greek style, and a long-necked scent bottle, which to this very day contained the ghost of a perfume of long ago. There was the old Parisian card-case in the silky glory of the Second Empire, the century-old miniature writing-table of mother-of-pearl and the bucket of the same material with a tiny landscape painted on it. In a separate paper were souvenirs of dinners at Francis Joseph's court: petrified sweets, with Queen Elizabeth and her fan stuck on them, the old King when he was still young, Archduke Rudolph with Stephanie's fair head at his side. Among other things there was a little carriage, standing on a silken cushion and containing golden flagons and bunches of grapes. Next I found the gold filigree butterfly. Then there came a little porcelain group of marvellous beauty: on a little toilet-table sat a tiny monkey who was looking into the looking-glass; behind him stood a group of laughing rococo ladies, and their whispering heads were reflected in the mirror too.

Suddenly I instinctively put my hands behind my back.

"Do you remember, mother? We always had to put our hands behind our backs when we looked at this." We began to laugh, both of us, and at that moment there was nothing else in this whole wide world that mattered. And through the open white doors I saw myself, a mischievous fair child, on tiptoe, looking up with religious awe, and I saw my beautiful young mother, with the porcelain monkey-group in her hand.

"Do you remember? . . ." And memory kindly took us back to happy, quiet times. My mother said: "I brought this from Paris in '61, this was given me by my mother, the pair of this one was bought by the Empress Eugénie . . ." At the bottom of the box there was a little packet. And there, at the very end I found again my forgotten love: a lady in a yellow dress, my favourite bit of china. But I was disappointed with it now. It had no mark and its origin was unknown. It was curious that in childhood's days she seemed to have been much more beautiful in her yellow, china crinoline. She stood on the spread edges of her crinoline and for that reason she had no need of feet. Her hair was brown and her waist ridiculously slender.

While I was looking at her, steps resounded in the quiet street and stopped in front of the house. Then the front door bell rang. That sound dispersed all the magic that had surrounded us. The picture of childhood fell in ruins and the folding doors of the old house shut one after the other.

My mother's hand remained on the table. She sat motionless in the green armchair and turned her head back a little as if listening. We did not speak a word, yet knew that we were thinking of the same thing. The silence was so absolute that we could hear the steps of the concièrge going towards the door. The key turned. There was talking down below. And then we could hear the steps coming up the stairs. Would they stop at the first floor for us, or would they go on? We held our breath to hear the better.

The steps went on.

My mother's rigid attitude relaxed, and she leant back in the arm-chair. "What can the time be?" she said after a while. I was packing away the treasures of the old china cabinet, one after the other. Should we ever see them again? They might be smashed, they might be carried off. I took leave of them, one by one. Nowadays one is for ever taking leave . . .

. . . .

February 25th.

What are they waiting for? The night has passed, so has the day, and I am still free. Nobody has been arrested yet. Pogány insisted on the arrests being made, and Böhm proposed them to the cabinet council, which accepted the proposal unanimously. The fate of the arrested Communists was settled unanimously too. They were to be detained only for the sake of appearances, not to protect the town from them, but to protect them from the vengeance of the police.

Since Baron Arco's bullet laid low Kurt Eisner, the Jewish tyrant of Bavaria, the Government has been getting more and more nervous. Since the Soldiers' and Workers' Council in Munich decided for the Dictatorship of the proletariat, the Communists party here is getting more audacious every day. Red news comes from Berlin, from Saxony, and, like a distant earthquake, it shakes our town.

Notwithstanding the request of the Entente, the date of the elections for the National Assembly has again been postponed. Perhaps in March, or in April . . . If it's delayed so far the fight will be hard. The party at present in power is employing unheard-of stratagems. The achievements of the revolution: freedom of the press, freedom of thought and of opinions, freedom of association and meeting, all these exist only for them. Our opinion has no longer a press. One newspaper dared to raise the question of shirking work, and the gigantic amount paid out in unemployment doles; the Communists demolished its offices. Then came the turn of another which had attacked Hatvany's book, the chronicle of their revolution. Others followed, and the plant of their printers was wrecked too.

The same sinister spirit which directed destruction fell like a strangling nightmare on the mind and brain of the press. Even journalists, whose patriotic feelings were opposed to it, were forced to join a Trade-Union. By means of the Trade-Union, three Jews became the dictators of the written word. All the well-disposed papers and printers were silenced, and the Hungarian spirit was banished from the journalists' club. When the Markgrave Pallavicini tried to make a breach in the Communist and Social Democratic stronghold by purchasing an existing paper, the terror had already reached such a pitch that Fényes turned up with his armed sailors to prevent him from taking possession of it. After this it was obvious that abolition of the freedom of the press was being achieved with the aid of the same Government which had crushed the freedom of assembly by means of Red soldiers, and the freedom of opinions by the means of the 'popular law' of internments. We are not even allowed to assemble: our meetings are broken up by the same Red soldiers who demolish the editorial offices. And yet the Socialists dare not appeal to the country, for who knows what answer it might give?

They promised to bring the country happiness. Hungary has never been unhappier than now. Public opinion in the Provinces has lately turned entirely against them. They had to do something, so they produced the mirage of land distribution; and Károlyi, who had previously taken up a mortgage of several millions on his property, went out with a noisy following to his estate at Debrö and, before a kinematograph camera, received the claims of tenants on the land which was laden with debts and did not really belong to him any longer. An old peasant was elected to present his claim first: an old servant of the Károlyi estate. In a lofty speech Károlyi sang his own praise. The old peasant answered. Unfortunately he was not allowed to say what he wanted to: he had been carefully coached, but even so he made a slight slip in his address. "I have served the Károlyi family to the third degeneration . . ." They stopped him then. The Social Democrats sent their delegates to this theatrical distribution of land. They feel that if they don't succeed in fooling the level-headed agricultural population of Hungary they will lose the election. In many villages the Social Democratic agitators are driven away with broken heads. It is the women who enrage the people against them: "Blasphemers, *sans patrie!*"

But a thing like that does not embarrass the Social Democrats: they adopt a disguised programme for the rural districts. Since one of the leaders of the broken-up small-holders party, Stephen Szabó of Nagyatád, has joined the Károlyi government in Budapest the Socialist propaganda has appropriated the patriotic and religious mottoes of that party. The Red Jewish agitators, before addressing the people, kneel down on the platform, make the sign of the cross and pretend to say their prayers. Then they start like this: "Praised be the Lord Jesus Christ, we too, Social Democrats, believe in the all-powerful God . . ."

Notwithstanding the threats of the new 'popular law' the various Protestant and Catholic women's organisations bravely carry on their work. The National Association had a meeting this morning. The whole committee was present, not one was missing; it seemed like a deliberate demonstration. These women can be great and noble. Is this to be our last meeting?

"If anything happened," I said, "and I were prevented from coming again, I should ask Elizabeth Kállay to take my place. If her turn comes, and she cannot be here any longer, let someone else take her place, and so on. The links of the chain must not be broken."

There was stern resolution in our dark, insignificant little office.

Countess Raphael Zichy looked at me while she addressed the others: "There is one among us whom the Government wants to arrest. Let us decide that if this should happen, we shall go, with a hundred thousand women, up to the castle and claim to be arrested too, because we have all done what she has done."

She was not laughing now. And in all the weary journey of this wintry world I have never been given anything more precious.

. . . .

February 26th.

Early this morning the door bell rang. Steps tramped about the ante-room. A little later the little German maid came in.

"Two soldiers were looking for you, and asked if you were in town. They had an urgent message. I told them you were in town but had gone out."

As she spoke I knew that they had come to find out if I had escaped. It is quite the custom nowadays; they ring, inquire, and go. They follow me in the streets, and sometimes even walk behind me up the stairs.

It makes one feel like a cornered quarry. I'm be-

COUNT KÁROLYI DISTRIBUTING HIS LANDS AT DEBRO.

ginning to wish that something would happen. If it has to be, let them arrest me; but this underhand spying gets on one's nerves. It is reported in town that I have already been arrested. The telephone bell is continually ringing—friends inquiring if I am still at home.

Later Count Bethlen came to tell me that the internments had been suspended after Szurmay, the former Minister of Defence, and Szterényi, the former Minister of Commerce, had been arrested. They went for them after midnight, arrested them and took them somewhere on the right bank of the Danube.

In the evening my mother and I played Patience. It is about the only old-time custom that is left to us now. To-morrow I shall have one more day at home . . . As for the day after—but in these times that is such a distant date that one dares not think of it if one wants to live.

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February 27th.

Bishop Count Mikes has been arrested: his diocese waits for him in vain. Once there was an Archbishop down there in Kalocsa for whom the faithful in the Cathedral waited in vain too, when the time came for Mass. He had girded on his sword, had gone to do battle for Hungary, and had perished with his six bishops on the fields of Mohács. But his spirit is not dead. It has appeared now and then in the history of Hungary, and to-day it is here again. Its name to-day is John Mikes.

Some of us who went to the Association this morning spoke of him. Suddenly the news came that Communist soldiers had run amok in the neighbouring street and were coming to break up the women's meeting.

"Let's go," somebody suggested.

"I stay!" And three others stayed with me to see it through. To save our rings and watches we handed them to one of those who left. There were shouts in the street. People were running about in the house. Then the noise subsided and the visit of the Reds did not come off.

In the afternoon I went to see the daughter of

General Türr, the Hungarian who had been Garibaldi's right-hand man and one of the heroes of Italy's fight for freedom. It was rather a shock to see an Italian officer there, his chest covered with decorations. Where had he got them? I thought of the Hungarian dead at Doberdo and San Michele. And I also remembered that the Czechs were at present using Italian rifles to beat out the brains of Hungarian peasants in Upper Hungary.

When the commander of the American troops landed in France he shouted: "*Nous voilá, Lafayette!*" . . . When the Italian general who is leading the Czechs over the defenceless Carpathians stepped on Hungarian soil I wonder if he said, "*Nous voilá, Tüköry . . . nous voilá, Türr! . . .*"

My hand twitched when I gave it to Italy's soldier. And yet this stranger seemed a sympathetic, well-intentioned man. And Italy once was my second home, dear good friends of my youth live there and the fate of our two peoples has often taken a common road. We must forget, but it is still very hard.

We tried to inform Signora Türr of the situation, but Károlyi's ministers had preceded us. They had betrayed themselves. Signora Türr spoke of them with the greatest contempt and promised to inform her government of the country's desperate plight. "Why, what you have got here amounts practically to Bolshevism . . ." Practically!

. . . .

February 28th.

It seemed quite unusual to have been in society again, without any serious cause or purpose, for nothing special, just as we used to in old times. Countess Mikes gave a tea party in honour of Stephanie Türr.

Loafing soldiers on the look-out gathered round the entrance when we arrived. Where are the old times? Where are the homes that knew no care? Electric lights dimmed in silken shades, the dainty lines of beautiful dresses, Paris scents, the smoke of Egyptian cigarettes; flowers, a shower of flowers——.

Now there are last Spring's dresses, dim light, scanty heating, cigarettes of a coarse tobacco.

Scents exist no more, and in a wide-necked vase three miserable, sad flowers. Hungarian society no longer has a social life. Those who can amuse themselves in these times are not Hungarians. Salons are dead, they have become the meeting-place of embittered conspirators where people talk to each other and then look anxiously behind them. Practically every Hungarian house is spied upon by its own servants. We know it but cannot remedy it.

Everything has changed, even conversation. In former times it turned on human interests, music, theatres, books, distant towns, foreign countries, acquaintances. Now we ask each other "What was it like in jail? Have they searched your house yet? I thought you had been arrested." And if somebody says "I'm glad to see you" it has a different meaning from what it used to have. Count Albert Apponyi passed smiling and came up and shook my hands warmly. "So you are still free! . . ."

I met Stephanie Türr once more before she left, and talked to her in the hall of the Hotel Bristol. She gave me a solemn promise; she will try to help us when she gets home. The Italian officer who had been given her as an escort for her personal safety, said nervously:

"Signora, you are watched. There are detectives here." Then he spoke so low that I could hardly hear him. "*E pericoloso*," and he winked and nodded to me. "Be careful, we can leave, but those unfortunates who remain here are playing with their lives."

I felt as if there were only two kinds of humanity in the world: those who are happy and those who are unfortunate. And these foreigners look upon us as if they were looking, half in pity, half in curiosity, through the grating of a mortuary.

CHAPTER XVII.

March 1st-5th.

Winter is still with us, but the winds bring signs of awakening from afar. March . . . the month of fevers and commotions. On the earth fatigue and restlessness chase each other. Flooded rivers race along. There is no visible sign of it, yet spring is there somewhere over the horizon.

Whose spring is this to be? Ours or theirs? Signs of evil omen prophesy against us. The monster, raised from the dark by Károlyi's party in October, shows its head daily more boldly and now grips the city with innumerable tentacles. Its suckers pierce the flesh of Budapest, and where they fasten themselves the streets become convulsed, and, like blood, red flags trickle out of the houses.

The Galileists openly avowed at their last meeting that they are Communists. At the instigation of Maria Goszthonyi and a Jewish Communist woman the Socialist women demonstrated in the Old House of Commons against the religious and patriotic spirit in the schools. On the initiative of John Hock, himself a priest, orators clamoured in favour of abolishing the Catholic priests' celibacy. Revolutionary orders from the War Office and the Soldiers' Council spread all over the country. Pogány has sent instructions to the various military detachments that they should, with the help of the confidential men, elect officers of the most advanced political opinions and dismiss the others.

In the Town Hall the Workers' Council has now passed sentence of death on the system of small holdings and on the distribution of land. This distribution would at least have left Hungarians to some extent possessed of their birthright. But that would have retarded the plans of our new conquerors. So they want to socialize it and create producers' co-operative Societies, controlled from Budapest, and directed, instead of by the old Hungarian landlords, by people who, as Kunfi said: "are inspired by the new spirit of Hungary." They want to achieve the revolution of the soil even as they achieved their political revolution. After the wheel, they want to lay hands on the ship itself.

Outside the walls, no less than inside, the red plague is spreading. I remember the first red flag hoisted. It hung alone for a long time, then it was followed by others. The rebellion of October ordered the beflagging of the town. The perpetrators of that crime commanded an obscene display of joy in the hour of our great disaster, and Budapest donned in cowardly fashion the festive decoration imposed upon her, while the country was being torn to pieces all around. In the days that followed she did not dare to remove it: she stood there, beflagged, during the downfall, under the heel of foreign occupation, like a painted prostitute, and the national colours became antagonistic to our souls, an insult to, a mockery of, our grief. Though it sounds like the talk of a madman, I say that I began to hate the colours for which I would formerly have loved to give my life.

Now the red, white, and green flags are disappearing rapidly. But the soiled colours of the nation are not replaced in the country's capital by the black of mourning. Every day there are more and more red flags in the streets of this unprincipled town, which is always outrunning itself and stamping its past into the mud. Once I loved this town and wrote its romance, so that its people might learn to love it through my art.* Now I have become a stranger within its gates and have no communion with it. I impeach it and repudiate it.

And this accusation is not raised against the foreign race which has achieved power, which has attained its end by sheer perseverance, ingenuity, industry and pluck—but against Magyardom and the whole nation, who have, heedlessly, incapably and blindly, given up their own heart—the capital.

All past powers and governments are responsible for this. The reproach concerns to the same extent those politicians who are still debating about shades and won't see that to-day there are only colours, and won't feel that in a short time there will be no more colours, but only one colour, and that that one will be—red.

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* *The Old House.*

This bitter thought brought to my mind a Red soldier whom I saw when I was on duty at the railway station. Some armed men came into the hall where we have our Red Cross. They were commanded by a strapping young Hungarian. He stopped in front of me and asked me whether I had seen ninety-six men pass there. They came from Deés, were Whites, armed, and their track had been lost.

"I haven't seen them." Then my eyes caught sight of his cap. A broad red ribbon was sewn round it. "What have you done with the red, white, and green one?"

"We lost that on the Piave," the soldier answered.

"There you lost the black and yellow one.* You have torn off our own colours yourselves." As I said this I looked straight into his eyes. He couldn't stand my gaze: he snatched the cap from his head and hid it behind his back:

"Well, and you gentlefolk, why don't you ever give us a lead?"

Many times have those words echoed in my ears since then, every time a soldier or a workman has flung at me the accusation of want of leadership. It seems to be a characteristic of our politicians and intellectuals.

. . . .

March 6th.

An old woman stood on the edge of the curb and made queer, whining sounds. People looked at her and went on. A few street urchins jumped about her and laughed at her. When I came near I noticed that she was blind. She was making heartrending appeals out of her eternal darkness to the passers-by, and wanted to cross the busy street, but there was none to give her a helping hand. For a moment or two I looked at the people: they were mostly poor: labourers, labourers' wives. They passed unmoved, caring for none but themselves.

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* Black and Yellow was the flag of the Hapsburgs, consequently of the Austro-Hungarian army, and was always disliked in Hungary as antagonistic to national aspirations.

The community of Marxian proletarians came to my mind. Those teachings which kill human community kill class community too. The times which tear the Saviour from the cross crucify humanity in His place.

I took the old woman's arm and led her through the medley of trams and carriages.

"I am sure it is one of the gentlefolk who leads me," the woman said; "our own people have become so cruel, even to their own kind . . ."

. . . .

March 7th-8th.

I live from day to day. I have not yet been called before a tribunal. I am not arrested, but their accusations against me remain, nobody has torn up the warrant for my arrest. Why they hesitate about executing it I don't know, for I shouldn't trouble to ask them why they arrested me, and certainly wouldn't accept any intervention on my behalf. I wouldn't ask them for anything.

I am free, and yet I am not. I had intended to visit two provincial towns in the interest of the Women's Association, but I was warned that if I were to leave Budapest it would be considered flight, and I should be arrested. What am I to do?

The elections are coming off shortly. I work too, though I don't believe in them. The situation would be just the same if, regardless of all intimidation, the patriotic masses were to secure a majority. Social Democracy is not particular about its means; it has roused the workmen with the story of the world-saving powers of the equal and secret ballot, and now when this has been obtained and it ought to submit to its judgment, the official Government journal says right out: "If Socialism were, for whatever reason, to lose the battle, it would be ultimately obliged to resort to arms against the counter-revolution . . ." The election can't help us. Something else will have to happen.

And it will happen. It is in the air. A monster cord is tightening round us, and when it snaps it will draw blood from those it strikes.

March 9th.

The red fist is raised higher every day and becomes more and more threatening. In a friendly way it points occasionally to the gallows, and then towards gaol. This morning it has again honoured me with its attention. The official paper of the Social Democratic headquarters, under the title 'The visiting Counter-Revolution,' makes an onslaught on those who, without the knowledge of the Government, are communicating with the envoys of the Entente, and, in company with others, it calls me a counter-revolutionary spy.

Somebody gave me the paper on the staircase of the Protestant Theological College. The Evangelical students were giving a concert, and between the songs I was to give an address. The words of 'The People's Voice' were still buzzing in my head when I stepped on the platform. I told the Protestant youths that every patriotic action which serves its purpose, that every patriotic word that hits the mark, regains a scrap of our torn country. *The People's Voice* accused me this morning of being a counter-revolutionary spy. I don't deny it, I try to inform foreign countries of the state of affairs by word of mouth and with my pen. I read an article of mine which a compatriot and his Swedish wife had taken to Stockholm for the *Svenska Dagbladed.* It was called: 'An appeal from a nation's scaffold.' I left it to my audience to decide whether that was counter-revolution or patriotism.

When I came to the end of my address a loud voice shouted: "We want a hundred thousand similar counter-revolutionaries!" And the whole audience jumped up and took up the cry.

A wave passed over the hall, a wave which grows, spreads over the country, while from the other side there comes another wave coloured red. Which is faster, which will be the first to break the dyke? It is all a question of time.

* * * * * * * *

March 10th-11th.

The street was silent. There was no shooting last night and the obscene shouts of drunken patrols were not heard. It might have been about half past one when a cart came down the street and stopped at our front door. "Surely they have not come to fetch me in a cart?" I thought, but all the same I collected my papers and stuck them under the bookcase. There was an odd noise below, as if something were being broken open. Then there followed steps carrying a heavy weight. The thought occurred to me that they might be robbing our cellar. I put out my lamp and went to the window. The street was practically dark, but I thought I could distinguish a cart and a few human figures.

What if they were stealing our coal! The idea made me shudder. I ran to the *concièrge*, made him open the door, and went out into the street. The cart was standing at the cellar-stairs of the neighbouring house, where a carpenter had his workshop. The night birds were dragging furniture out of it. One of the dark figures stood in front of me: "Good evening, Miss," he said.

"Good-evening," I answered, and with the egotism bred of our times I was glad that it was not our cellar into which they had broken. "Good-night," I added politely. "Good-night," came the answer.

Only when the door had shut behind me did I realise that these well-intentioned people might easily have knocked me down.

Such are the "Winter's Tales" enacted in the nights of Budapest . . .

. . . .

March 12th.

In the name of the women of Hungary we made a last attempt to-day to unite the adherents of law and order. The leaders gathered at my house: we all realised that this was our last chance. And when at length, after long discussions, we women were left to ourselves, all we could do was to sum up our efforts in the words: "we have failed again!"

Before going to bed the housekeeper brought her account books to my mother. She fixed her inquisitive eyes on me and said: "You look tired, miss. You've had so many visitors to-day! Perhaps it was an important meeting? . . ."

Instinctively I answered: "We discussed whether it would be possible to have the children's festival this year." And then straight out, in self-defence, I asked: "Your fiancé, he is Pogány's chauffeur, isn't he?"

She was taken aback by my sudden question and gave herself away:

"He carries Pogány sometimes, sometimes Böhm."

That was just what I wanted to know.

. . . .

March 13th.

Many people are stopping at the street corner, where a new poster is shrieking from the walls. It represents a giant workman bending over the Hungarian Parliament, at his feet a bucket of paint, and with a dripping brush he is painting the mighty mass of granite, which is our House of Parliament, red. Above the picture is the appeal 'Vote for the Social Democratic party.'

The everlasting pile of stones, and—red paint . . . That sums it up completely—even more than was intended.

The other day we stuck up our tiny poster. It was a map of Hungary: on a white field the green frontiers, and above, in red letters; 'National Association of Hungarian Women.' *They* are free to cover the walls with yard-long posters: ours was no bigger than a hand and took up little enough room, yet they could not tolerate it. I saw a little boy tearing them off.

"Why do you do that, sonny? It does not hurt you."

"I get twenty crowns a day to tear down those in national colours."

All around us foreign invaders are tearing our country to bits with impunity. In the capital, hired little Hungarian boys destroy its image.

The future lacerating itself.

. . . .

March 14th.

I think that has pained me more than anything else. The face of that boy has haunted me ever since I saw it. Whose contrivance is it that we should come to this? A new teacher walks among the children, a devilish red shadow has mounted the teacher's desk. It takes away from us the last thing that remained to console us. It started many years ago in the factories, then it prowled about the barrack-squares, and now it invades the schools. It puts up "confidential" boys and girls in opposition to the teacher's authority and gives them everything they were not allowed to touch before. "It was all stupid lies," it whispers incessantly, and gives them the idea of Divinity as a target for their pea-shooters, and the map of their country, with all it stands for, to make kites with. It even betrays their parents to them: "don't respect them!" it says. "You are only the result of their lasciviousness. They only sought their own pleasure in your existence, and you owe them neither gratitude nor obedience."

The devilish red shadow threatens morals with ever increasing impudence. "Let the human mind be set free," said Kunfi, and he replaced religious teaching in the schools by the exposition of sexual knowledge. Jewish medical students and lady doctors give erotical lectures to little boys and girls, and, so as to make their subject quite clear, films are shown which display what the children fail to understand. I heard of two little girls who lost their mental balance in consequence of these lectures. Some children come home disgusted and fall in tears into their mother's lap. But there are also those who laugh and say horrible things to their parents. After robbing the land the theft of souls has started, and Jesus appeals in vain that the little children be allowed to come unto Him: they must go no more.

A woman came to our office to-day. "The children turn against me," she complained, and her voice broke. "School has robbed me of their hearts."

I tried to console her, but she only shook her head: "What has been defiled in the children's soul can never be cleansed again."

I did not know what to say. After all, she was right.

. . . .

Talk is buzzing behind me. Voices are raised. Somebody coming from Sopron says that the

Austrians are covering the whole of West Hungary with their propaganda. The Czechs want a Slav corridor in those parts, right down to the Adriatic Sea. Another voice gives news of the British: "Don't you know? They have decided that the whole navigation on the Danube is to pass into the hands of the Czechs, including all Hungarian vessels" . . . "The Roumanians are advancing steadily," says a whisper. "In Paris they cannot advance the line of demarcation as fast as they pass beyond it."

In one county the Workers' Council has expelled the landlords and various estates have already been socialised. Young Jews from provincial towns now direct and control the old stewards and bailiffs who have grown old in hard work on the estates. One voice rose in alarm: "The Government is impounding all banking accounts and safe-deposits. There is a run on the banks. Something awful is going to happen."

. . . .

I looked at the woman near the window who was wiping the tears from her eyes. Lands, rivers, old estates, acquired fortunes, money, gold—they are lost, but they can be recovered. But what that woman is weeping for is lost for ever.

. . . .

March 15th.

This is the 70th anniversary of our glorious revolution of 1848. During the period of Austrian absolutism which followed it the nation commemorated it in secret. Then once more the flowers of that day, the national flags, were allowed to be unfurled freely. Anthems, songs, speeches, processions with flags. For half a century March the 15th was a service at the altar of liberty.

This day has never passed so dull and mute as it has this year. The flags, which have practically rotted off their staffs in the last few months, have lately become rare, and to-day they have not reappeared. It is said that it was by request of the Communist party that the Government has repudiated this day, though it claims to be its spiritual descendant.

The town, quiet during the day, went to sleep early. The March wind blows cold and chases through dark empty streets. The shop-signs swing like black shadows, and the brass plates of barbers' shops dance in the air.

Our street sleeps too. Through its dream a step breaks now and then. In the next room the clock with the alabaster pillars strikes midnight in hesitating strokes. Who goes there, in this stormy night?

I seem to see him. He is tall and wears an old-fashioned shabby dolman. His white shirt is folded over it, and the wind plays with the soft collar. His face is scarcely visible, so far has he drawn the cap over his eyes. He goes on and on, through empty, unfriendly streets. His spurs clink, and his big sword knocks against his boots. A motor races through the streets, its interior lit up by an electric bulb. A heavy-featured fat man leans back into the cushions. A patrol turns the corner. "Pogány," says one of the men. The boots of Red soldiers tramp unsteadily on the pavement. They pass the man in the dolman, look in his direction, but see him not. His fluttering collar touches them, but they feel it not. And he just glares at the red gashes left on their caps where the national cockades have been torn off.

"*What have you done with my rosettes?*"

His face turns paler than death. He goes on. His eyes wander over the empty flag-staffs between the red flags.

"*What have you done to my flags?*"

His way takes him past some lighted windows. They are working up there in an editorial office. Red soldiers stand with cocked revolvers in front of the editorial table. They are the censors, and the rotary presses hum in the cellars. Compositors in linen overalls, besmeared with ink, lean over their work.

"*What have you done with my free press? What have you done with its freedom born in March?*"

He leans over the compositors' shoulders, and his eyes pass over the letters. They do not see him, nor hear him; they go on composing the line: "Under the statue of Alexander Petöfi, Eugene Landler spoke of the significance of March 15th. The choir sang the Marseillaise."

"*What have you done with my songs?*"

He goes on again, dark and alone. He knows the streets, he knows the garden, the big quiet house with its pillars, between the rigid, wintry trees. He has reached the Museum. Under his hand the handle of the locked, barred gate gives way. The guardian wakes and looks out of his shelter. Nothing—it was a dream. The wind whistles, and the wanderer's collar flutters as he mounts the lofty stairs and stops at the top against the wall. He looks down, standing long immobile, and asks the winds why there is nobody to call: "Magyars! Arise!"

"*Don't they know it here? Who are the masters now, under Hargita and on the fields of Segesvár?*"

He is tired and would like to stretch himself at ease after the long sad road.

"*To whom have you given my grave?*"

There is no rest and there is no place for him to go to, he whose ghost had led me through the town on this homeless fifteenth of March.

Oh let him go, let him go in silence, for should he remain here and raise his voice to-morrow the Government of 'Independent Hungary' would arrest him as a counter-revolutionary.*

* * * * * * * *

March 16th.

I was at Fóth to-day, where I had intended to address the village women. But the bubbles rise no longer in the wine of Fóth. Spring has a heavy, foreboding atmosphere there to-day.

I went with two friends. Beyond the town white patches of snow were melting on the awakening black soil. The waters of winter flowed with a soft gurgle in the ditches.

"We cannot have a meeting to-day in the village,"

---

* The ghost is Petőfi, the national poet of Hungary, who, on March 15, 1848, roused the country with his famous song "Magyars! Arise!" He fought in the War of Independence and died a hero's death on the battlefield of Segesvár, in Transylvania, where he lies in an unknown grave. His poem, the national song, started the revolution. ('48)

I was told. "Another time, next week . . . there is a Social Democratic mass-meeting in the town hall, and a memorial service for those killed in the war at the cemetery. There is a lot of excitement, and I'm afraid the meeting of women would be interfered with."

We listened to the speeches from a window of the town hall. They differed widely from Budapest's orations. Here, the half-hearted war-cries were shouted under the national colours and mixed with hero-worship. It was the same in the cemetery. Then suddenly a drunken soldier stood up on the mound of a grave. Hatred was in his face and dark threats poured from his lips: "Let the gentle-folk learn. We are going to teach them. They cheated the people, and drove them into death. But just you wait now that we have got the power . . ."

Night was falling when our crowded train entered Budapest. There were no cabs, they have been on strike for the last four days, and I couldn't get on to an electric car. A soldier shoved me aside and dragged me off the steps. I watched him pushing his way in among the passengers to make room for himself. Apparently somebody shoved him back, for he drew his revolver and began to shoot at random. The car stopped, the passengers jumped off, women shrieked and there was a panic.

I walked along the streets. Nearly everywhere the pavement was pulled up and here and there red warning lamps blinked near the holes, but there were no road-menders. I thought of an old engraving of the French revolution. In the picture there were narrow old houses, and between them barricades on which figures in tight check trousers, and with top hats, but without coats, were shooting with very long guns with fixed bayonets. Barricades? Why, these paving stones practically offered themselves for that purpose.

What is it preparing for, this town which becomes stranger every day? What is it scheming now, when nearly every voice in it has been silenced and only the mind of the rabble finds expression? As I passed under the mass of the cathedral I looked up at its tower where a big bell hangs, high above all the towers and bells of the town. I remembered its voice. If only it might speak—but not to call to Mass. I want to hear it sound the tocsin, in desperate appeal . . .

. . . .

March 17th-18th.

People speak to me and I answer them; what I say sounds quite natural, yet I am only partly there, only bodily; the rest of me is walking ahead of myself and counting the hours.

I made a speech at a meeting to-day, and then wrote letters in the office, after which I had a talk with the secretary. Perhaps people didn't notice that my mind is now haunted by a single idea, an expectant desperate idea. The secretary had been in the country . . . Bad news . . . He had spoken to Bishop Prohaszka, who told him that a sharp plough is being prepared to tear up the soul of the Hungarian people. It will make a deep furrow, but it has to be, so as to make the ground the more fertile.

"It will be so," I said, as if I had heard the words of the bishop with the soul of Assisi repeated in my dream.

. . . .

The night between 19th-20th March.

The last embers died out in the fireplace: I began to shiver, yet I did not move. I sat in my chair in front of my writing-table and felt shudders running down my back.

I ought to have written my last manifesto in the name of the Association. I began it, but at the end of the first sentence the pen stopped in my hand, would not go on, drew aimless lines, and went on scratching when the ink had dried on it. Then it fell from my hand and rolled on the table. I took up a book at random, held it for a long time in my hands, and looked at its lettering. I don't know what it was. I closed it and shut my eyes. One hears better like that, and I am waiting.

The hours struck one after the other. Twelve, one, half-past one, a quarter to two . . . I put out the lamp and opened the window.

I went back to my table. The cold was streaming in through the open window and made me shiver.

The silence quivered, and it seemed to me as though a huge artery was throbbing in the air.

The clock struck two.

It is time now . . . Every nerve in my body was at high tension, my neck became rigid.

I don't know how long it lasted. I felt colder and colder. The clock struck again. Perhaps it was fast . . . About half an hour may have passed. My stiffness began to relax, as if the very bones of my body had melted; my head drooped.

So they have postponed it again!

It had been fixed for two o'clock this morning. We have arms enough, and the police and the gendarmery are on our side. But the signal did not come. The bells of the cathedral never sounded.

What has happened? Will it sound to-morrow, or the day after?

If only it is not too late . . .

. . . .

March 20th.

The night of the counter-revolution had been fixed for so many dates and had been postponed so many times that hope began to tire. Will it ever come? I thought. With an effort I roused myself from my weariness and concentrated my whole mind once more on expectation.

The town, too, seemed expectant, the very streets on the alert—at any rate so it seemed to me: there was an expectant silence in the very dawn. There were no newspapers—it is said that the compositors have struck for higher wages. I went to the bank. The Government has impounded all deposits, and no money is to be got anywhere. The shutters are drawn and the crowd outside pushes and swears in panic.

All sorts of rumours are flying about. Somebody reports that the Communist army is preparing something: disbanded soldiers are holding threatening meetings all over the suburbs, insisting on the release of Béla Kún and his companions. It is also reported that Michael Károlyi is planning something. In his hatred he had once sworn that he would destroy Tisza, even if the nation had to perish with him. Tisza is dead, but his soul has risen against Károlyi in the whole nation. And so Károlyi prepares a new vengeance. It is rumoured that this is not directed against Magyardom alone, which has regained consciousness and repudiates him, but also against the Entente, which will have nothing to do with him.

What is going to happen to us?

I went to the meeting of the Party of National Unity this afternoon and exchanged a few words with Count Stephen Bethlen. He said that great changes are to be expected; the powers of the Entente had informed Károlyi through their representatives that they would show consideration to a level-headed Government. To give weight to their demand they threatened us through Colonel Vyx with new lines of demarcation. Count Bethlen thought the situation less desperate than it had been lately, and I was reassured for a time.

I came home with a friend through remarkably crowded streets. She lived a long way off and we were late, so she stayed with us for the night. I roused myself in the evening and we worked together on the women's manifesto. It was about midnight when my mother came in to us, and, as I usually do when I have written something, I asked her opinion and followed her advice. Then she drove us off to bed. When I was left alone I tried to allay my restlessness by polishing the manuscript. Thus the time passed. It was two o'clock.

Suddenly, I don't know why, yesterday's excited expectation came over me again. I looked up and thought I heard the clanging of a bell a great distance away. My throat became dry, and my heart beat madly. I threw the window open.

But out there all was hopelessly quiet. It was just an hallucination . . . For a while I leaned out into the cold, black street. A shot was fired. Then the night resumed its stillness.

"I can stand it no longer." How often did we say that during the war! Then came the protracted debâcle of autumn; then winter, and our country was torn to pieces. We can't stand it . . . But we stood it. And who knows how much more we shall have to stand this spring?

I leaned on the window-sill, and in the dark I began to see visions, as if I were dreaming a nightmare. Suddenly the visions became definite. I saw myself in a big ugly house, with unusually high windows, opening in its bare high walls. We were sitting in the last room, waiting for something which we could not escape. There was no door in the room leading into the open, and down there the gate was wide open, with nobody to guard it. Through the draughty porch steps came inwards, and nobody stopped them. They came up the stairs. For some time one door in the house opened after another. One more, and one more, each nearer than the last . . .

We can't stand it any longer . . . The minutes stretch to horrible infinity, and yet we cannot move, and expectation becomes terror. The steps are already hesitating at the last door. Something is happening there. Nobody is yet visible, but the door-handle moves, slowly, carefully, and then it creaks.

For God's sake open it. Let anything happen, whatever it is, but only let it happen!

. . . .

March 21st.

Rain falls, and water flows from the dilapidated gutters. The drops beat on the metal edging of my window and sound as if a skeleton finger were knocking, asking for admittance.

The hall bell rang. It was Countess Chotek bringing a contribution for the Association. Then Countess Mikes arrived, though it was not yet nine o'clock. She whispered in my ear: "I have very bad news. I must speak to you."

I took the money and we went out. She told me in the carriage that a reliable person had been present yesterday at a Communist meeting. The majority of workmen had gone over to the Communist party—the iron and metal workers had all gone over—and they had decided henceforth to oppose the parties in power and at the same time break down the counter-revolution.

Is the demoniacal magician who with his evil eye has cast a spell of suicidal lethargy over the whole nation now going to close his hand definitely on his benumbed prey?

We went to the offices of the Association and had scarcely arrived there when Countess Louis Batthyány rushed in and signalled to me. We retired to a corner. It was only then that I noticed how thin and deadly pale her face was. She spoke nervously. The Government had resigned. Colonel Vyx had handed it an ultimatum. The Entente has again advanced the line of demarcation and now asks also for a neutral zone. And Károlyi, on reliable information, wants to hand over the power to the Communists.

So that was Károlyi's vengeance . . .

Elisabeth Kállay and her sister came in. On hearing the news they rushed off again to inform Archduke Joseph, and went also to Stephen Bethlen to ask him to attempt the impossible with the delegates of the Entente.

Within the last few days Colonel Vyx has withdrawn the French Forces from Budapest. All in all there might be about three hundred Spahis in the neighbourhood. He knew what was going on. Was he intentionally depriving the population of the town of their only safeguard?

Countess Batthyány got up to go. Before leaving she whispered in my ear that I must escape during the night, as my name was on the first list of persons to be arrested.

I went home. It poured the whole afternoon and the rain beat a tattoo on my window. I telephoned for my sister, speaking softly so that my mother, who was ill in bed, could not hear. She knows nothing as yet.

Later, a friend came to tell me that it was essential for me to escape, they had decided to hang me; so when Countess Chotek came back I returned the money to her which she had brought in the morning for the Association, saying, "It would not be safe any longer with me." She brought the same warning as my other friend.

"I won't go," I said. "It would be cowardice to run away. If they want to arrest me, let them do it. I shall stay here."

"But we shall need you later, when we can resume our work," my friend said, and tried to persuade me. "I would take you with me, but you wouldn't be safe there, for they're sure to search our place for my brother." I listened to her patiently, but I felt neither fear nor excitement, perhaps because of a curious illusion I had that the talk was not about me, but about somebody else.

About seven o'clock a young journalist friend came to us, deadly pale. He closed the door quickly behind him, and looked round anxiously as if he feared he had been followed. He also looked terrified.

"Károlyi has resigned," he said in a strained voice. "He sent Kunfi from the cabinet meeting to fetch Béla Kún from prison. Kunfi brought Béla Kún to the Prime Minister's house in a motor car. The Socialists and Communists have come to an agreement and have formed a Directory of which Béla Kún, Tibor Számuelly, Sigmund Kunfi, Joseph Pogány and Béla Vágó are to be the members. They are going to establish revolutionary tribunals and will make many arrests to-night. Save yourself—don't deliver yourself up to their vengeance."

Even as he spoke, shooting started in the street outside. Suddenly I remembered my night's vision . . . We are in the big ungainly house . . . the door handle of the last room is turning, and the last door opens . . .

An awful voice shrieked along the street:

"LONG LIVE THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT!"

THE END.*

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* The second part of Miss Tormay's diary, containing the account of the Commune and of her escape and pursuit, will be published as soon as possible.

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